

PLANTING IDEAS • BEAUTIFUL GARDENS • EXPERT ADVICE

GARDENS

ILLUSTRATED

The plant issue

DAZZLING
PLANTS
FOR
SUMMER

Irresistible
carnations
rethinking the retro

THE BEST
*herbaceous
clematis*

Sissinghurst
revisited

Dan Pearson breathes
new life into Vita's
Mediterranean dream

How to
garden
greener
make choices that matter

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1. Willis Towers Watson directly manages \$148.6 billion for institutional investors, as at 30 June 2020, and advises them on \$3.4 trillion, as at 31 December 2019. 2. MSCI All Country World Index.

Editor's letter



Our gardens are now in full swing. We will have forgotten the loss of an early seedling to a late frost or the demise of a French bean to a hungry slug. There's more than enough to hold our attention, and perhaps even to take time to sit and reflect on the generosity of nature. When this generosity is equalled in a gardener, we're on our way to achieving something great.

In this issue we highlight just some of the plants and gardens nurtured so thoughtfully by passionate gardeners and plantspeople. Our kitchen-garden columnist Aaron Bertelsen takes a moment to note other vegetable plots that offer him food for thought – and perhaps a generously offered handful of fresh produce too. We also admire the dedication and expertise Jim Marshall has shown in propagating and collecting the once-fashionable perpetual carnation, eager to get us to discover its charms anew.

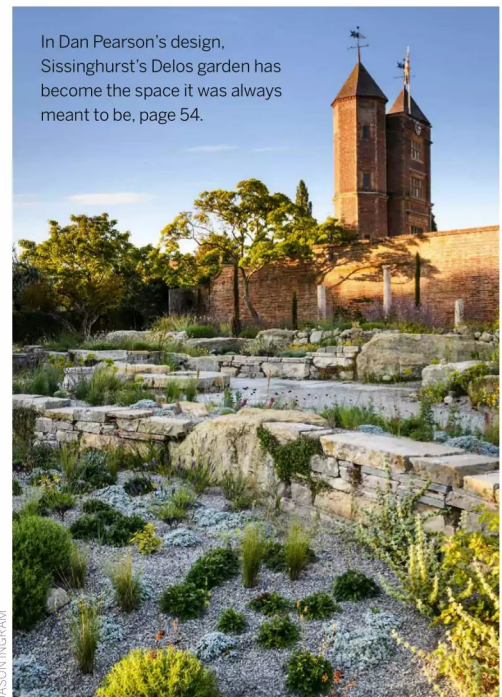
On page 54, Dan Pearson guides us through the newly developed garden at Sissinghurst Castle, channelling the spirit of Vita and Harold whose idea was to recreate the planting and feel of the Greek island of Delos. Dan has taken that vision and added his own knowledge and experience to create a garden with a dynamism all of its own.

With our hopes set on more certain freedoms, it's time to look around us and absorb what's offered to us – and give back what and where we can.

I hope you enjoy the issue,

Lucy Bellamy

LUCY BELLAMY, EDITOR



JASON INGRAM

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JASON INGRAM



Jo McKerr has turned a brownfield site into a beautiful, biodiverse garden that teems with wildlife, page 30.

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COVER IMAGE

Dianthus 'Doris Allwood'
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- Win a luxury stay at The Alverton in Cornwall and tickets to the Lost Gardens of Heligan – page 113

Our packaging

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Horti:couture

Make a date for our annual
Autumn Conference from
the **Royal Botanic Gardens,
Kew** online and in-person on
Saturday 9th October 2021

For centuries **plants and gardens** have clearly been influential on fashion sensibility. The fashion industry's most lauded designers are known for recurrent themes around **flora and gardens** and the influence of their own gardens on their work.

For our 2021 Autumn Conference we explore **the influence of plants, gardens and landscapes on fashion** and the favour that fashion returns to our work as gardeners, horticulturists and designers.

Visit our website lcgd.org.uk for more information on our speakers and our ticket options starting at £59. The conference will be available with very limited in-person tickets at Kew and will also be broadcast online.

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Contributors



Jodie Jones

Jodie interviews photographer Howard Sooley, page 64. *"Howard's work has been on my bookshelf and in my Instagram feed for years, so to meet the man behind the camera was a pleasure."*



Tom Brown

Tom chooses the best plants from the non-climbing, herbaceous clematis, page 66. *"Herbaceous clematis are such an easy and rewarding group of plants to grow, revel and indulge in."*



Tim Richardson

Tim reflects on the rise of community gardening, page 78. *"I was amazed at all the different cultural, artistic and political activities it encompasses – it's not just about growing veg in old tyres."*

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS



James Basson

James lives in the South of France where he runs Scape Design with his wife Helen, specialising in low-maintenance and dry gardens. He is a fervent advocate for creating sustainable landscapes. The winner of four Chelsea Gold medals, he was awarded Best in Show in 2017.

Fergus Garrett

Fergus was appointed head gardener at Great Dixter by Christopher Lloyd in 1993. He is passionate about passing on his knowledge through student programmes at Dixter and worldwide lectures. He was awarded an RHS Associate of Honour in 2008 and an RHS Victoria Medal of Honour in 2019.

Anna Pavord

Anna's books include her bestseller *The Tulip* and most recently *Landskipping*. For 30 years she was *The Independent's* gardening correspondent. In 2000 the RHS awarded her the Veitch Memorial Medal. She lives and gardens in Dorset.

Dan Pearson

Dan is one of the UK's best-known garden designers, familiar to many through his gardening columns in the *Observer* magazine. Eight of his gardens, including the Tokachi Millennium Forest in Japan, have won awards and he was awarded Best in Show for his garden at Chelsea in 2015.

Sarah Price

Sarah is one of the UK's most sought-after garden designers who gained worldwide recognition for her designs for the 2012 London Olympic Park. She won Gold at Chelsea in 2012 and 2018, and was GMG Garden Columnist of the Year in 2016 for her design series in *Gardens Illustrated*.

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27-30 SEPTEMBER 2021

WEST COUNTRY KITCHEN GARDENS

From plot to plate, our four-day reader holiday uncovers some of the South West's most exciting potagers and chefs' gardens



TOUR HOST

Sarah Wain
Sarah, along with her husband Jim Buckland, is the inspirational force behind the restoration of the Kitchen Garden at West Dean, Sussex, where they perfected the growing of both fruit and vegetable crops.

With the call to grow your own becoming ever louder, our tour offers help, inspiration and expertise on how to grow the finest kitchen garden produce throughout the year. We visit a contrasting selection of the very best examples of kitchen gardens in the South West: we are taken from the plot to the plate at both **The Pig at Combe** and at Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall's organic smallholding at **River Cottage**; at **South Wood Farm** we see Arne Maynard's design for a productive potager and we glimpse true estate gardening at **Edmondsham House**, while also visiting the unusual 18th-century 'serpentine' wall of the kitchen garden at **Deans Court**. As well as organic gardening, we also consider the no-dig approach, as espoused by **Charles Dowding** at his own impressively productive garden and come bang up to date with a visit to boutique hotel **The Newt** with its decorative kitchen garden. The tour is based at the Georgian **Summer Lodge Hotel** in the Dorset village of Evershot and surrounded by rolling hills, with a small kitchen garden of its own and where guests will be warmly welcomed.

BOOKING DETAILS

Price per person, based on two people sharing is £2,595 (a single supplement of £300 is levied by the hotel).

The price includes: three nights' bed & breakfast accommodation at Summer Lodge; three dinners with wine; plus three lunches, and transport from Bristol Parkway Railway Station or Summer Lodge. The price does not include extras or travel insurance. Please note that hotels used by Boxwood Tours are invariably hotels of character featuring a variety of rooms and styles.

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Tom Massey's design for Yeo Valley's show garden.



Yeo Valley Organic Garden, Somerset.

THURSDAY 19 AUGUST 2021

DISCOVER HOW YEO VALLEY IS TAKING ORGANIC GARDENING TO CHELSEA

Join *Gardens Illustrated's* exclusive event at Yeo Valley Organic Garden in Somerset to preview their ground-breaking RHS Chelsea Flower Show garden, with designer Tom Massey and owner and creator Sarah Mead



Tom Massey is an award-winning designer known for his clever combinations of hard and soft landscaping.

Sarah Mead is the creator of an extensive organic garden on the Yeo Valley family farm. Joining them is plantsperson, writer and lecturer, **Marina Christopher**.

A beautiful patchwork of colour and texture, Yeo Valley Organic Garden is one of the UK's largest organic ornamental gardens certified by the Soil Association. It has been created by **Sarah Mead** over the past 30 years and occupies six and a half acres around the family home on the Yeo Valley Organic farm.

It is also the inspiration behind Yeo Valley Organic's show garden at this year's much-anticipated RHS Chelsea Flower Show. Designed by award-winning garden designer **Tom Massey** in collaboration with Sarah Mead, the garden will offer a rich tapestry of flowering plants that encourage wildlife, support pollinators and nurture soil health. It features an open perennial meadow brimming with flowering plants, walls made of biochar logs that highlight the importance of keeping carbon in the soil, and a hand-crafted wooden hide by celebrated sculptor Tom Raffield.

Join us for our exclusive reader day to meet Sarah Mead and Tom Massey for a behind-the-scenes glimpse at the show garden and those highlights of Yeo Valley's garden that inspired Tom's design. In addition to the tour and talk, we have arranged a special Q&A session to feature Sarah, Tom and plant expert **Marina Christopher** for you to ask your own questions about how to grow better organically and with wildlife in mind.

EVENT DETAILS

Price £122 per person*, including lunch and refreshments.

Date Thursday 19 August, 2021.

Venue Yeo Valley Organic Gardens, Holt Farm, Bath Road, Blagdon, North Somerset BS40 7SQ.

Programme

11am Arrival – light refreshments outside

11.30am Garden tour in the company of Sarah Mead and Tom Massey

1pm Two-course lunch with a glass of wine in the garden tea room

2pm Chelsea experiences: Tom Massey talks about his times at Chelsea and looks to the Yeo Valley Organic 2021 garden

3pm Refreshment break

3.15pm Organic gardening Q&A with Sarah Mead, Tom Massey and Marina Christopher

4pm Tea and cake followed by an opportunity to shop for plants, flowers and Yeo Valley Organic products

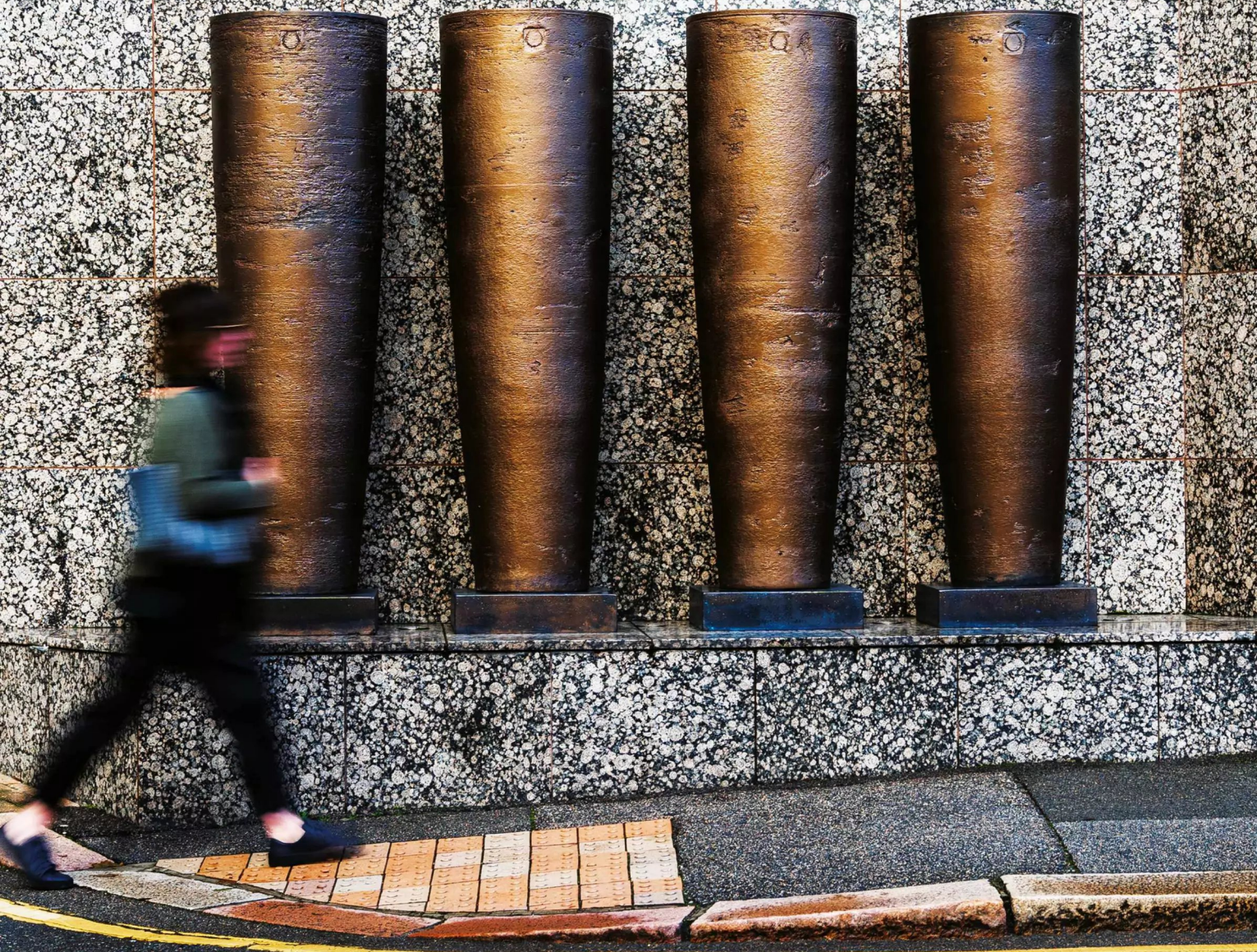
5pm Departure

TO BOOK

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DIG IN

What's happening, what's in flower and what to buy this month

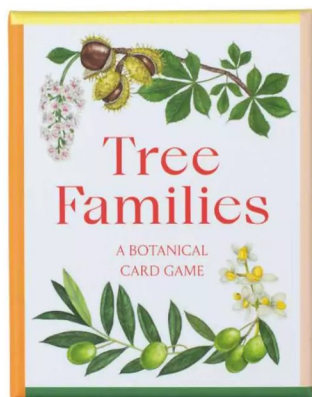


Earthly paradise

Islamic Paradise Gardens, first made by the Persians more than 1,000 years ago, continue to inspire garden designers today as spaces of sanctuary and contemplation. *Making Paradise*, a new exhibition at the Aga Khan Centre Gallery near London's King's Cross, explores the Islamic concept of *al-Jannah* or Paradise through a richly diverse range of works, from Soraya Syed's Islamic calligraphy to ceramic plates by Yasmin Hayat. On the gallery's four walls (evoking the quadrants of a Paradise Garden), are botanical illustrations and contemporary works of fruit and vegetation, while the centrepiece, as in a Paradise Garden, is a fountain, designed by Emma Clark, from which springs a paper-cut installation by American artist Clare Celeste Börsch. The multi-sensory experience is enhanced by a perfume especially created by Alessandro Cancian dispersed throughout the gallery, and a nature soundscape by Geoff Sample. Entry is free but tickets must be booked in advance. Until 30 September. agakhancentre.org.uk

News

COMPILED BY KATIE BEALE



Family fun

Brush up on your tree knowledge and have some fun with a new family game. Based on the Happy Families card game we probably all remember from childhood, *Tree Families* is an entertaining way to recognise trees by collecting cards with the tree, flower, fruit and leaf to create a tree family. With text written by Tony Kirkham, head of the arboretum at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, and detailed illustrations from Ryuto Miyake, *Tree Families* is not just a fun game but a great way to learn about the natural world. Priced £12.99 from laurenceking.com



Soil searching

The Land Gardeners, aka Bridget Elworthy and Henrietta Courtauld (below), are passionate about soil, and approach their mission to improve the health of the nation's soil, and by extension its plants, with evangelistic zeal. In July they're bringing some of their considerable know-how to the RHS Hampton Court Palace Garden Festival with a series of talks and demonstrations, including how to create their signature compost cake – made in layers all in one go. The soil theme continues at this year's Festival with an RHS Allotment area offering advice and tips on growing your own. The Festival takes place 6-11 July, 10am-7pm (5pm Sunday), with tickets starting at £22.75. rhs.org.uk



CLAIRE TAYLORS



Rent-a-plot

Do you have a neglected front garden you're not using or perhaps you'd love to start growing some veg but your second-floor flat doesn't even have a balcony? AllotMe is a new website that aims to link up the gardenless with garden owners who have some spare outside space they'd be happy to rent out. The brainchild of Conor Gallagher, the site works a little like Airbnb, allowing anyone with spare garden space to list their plot for free. They can also set the rent and agree terms of use, although there is a minimum renting term of three months. Find out more at allotme.co.uk



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- David

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“

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- Julia



Win tickets to Jekka's HerbFest

For more than 30 years Jekka McVicar has been at the forefront of innovation when it comes to growing and using herbs. In July she's launching the first Jekka's HerbFest at her Herbetum, just north of Bristol. Over the weekend of 2-4 July the Herbfest will offer a host of talks and demonstrations on all things herbal from food, garden and health experts, including Jo Thompson, Charles Dowding, chefs Rob Howell and Nathan Outlaw and Jekka herself. *Gardens Illustrated* has a pair of tickets for the event on 4 July. For a chance to win visit gardensillustrated.com/herbfest

ANDREW MONTGOMERY



VISIONS / GAP PHOTOS

Small wonder

Think pampas grass and you're probably imagining a huge flowering grass that towers above all else, but a new cultivar from Thompson & Morgan will make you think again. Growing to a height of just 60cm, but with the same silky, silver flowers and feathery texture of a regular pampas, *Cortaderia selloana* 'Tiny Pampa' is an ideal option for a small garden. It works beautifully in a pot on a terrace but can also be used to frame small borders. Priced at £16.99 from thompson-morgan.com



WRITE IN STYLE

Bodleian Library Publishing has produced a beautiful set of notebooks with botanical illustrations from Johann Wilhelm Weinmann's 18th-century catalogue of plants, *Phytanthoza Iconographia*. Each of the three, ruled, A5 notebooks features one of the book's exquisite colour plates – of lemons, chillies and apples – on its cover, and the set of three costs £10.99 from bodleianshop.co.uk

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DIARY

COMPILED BY KATIE BEALE AND ANNIE GATTI

1 Simon Bull Sculpture Exhibition

A collection of new sculptures, designed to frame a view or draw your eye to a part of the garden, by Simon Bull are on display in the walled garden at Scampston Hall. Until 18 July, Wednesday to Sunday, 10am-5pm. Admission free with garden entry. Scampston Hall, nr Malton, North Yorkshire YO17 8NG. Tel 01944 759111, scampston.co.uk

2 Botanical Portraits, As Chosen By...

For her new exhibition, photographer Kate Friend asked notable creatives, including Dan Pearson and Maggi Hambling, to pick a plant or flower to photograph. The portraits, all shot in each subject's home, garden or in Maggi Hambling's case her studio (shown), are on show at the Garden Museum until 1 August. Tickets must be booked in advance. 10.30am-5pm (4pm Saturdays), closed the first Monday of each month. £12. Garden Museum, Lambeth Palace Road, London SE1 7LB. Tel 020 7401 8865, gardenmuseum.org.uk

3 Roots to Seeds

Marking 400 years since the Oxford Botanic Garden opened in 1621, this exhibition at the Bodleian's Weston Library offers a fascinating insight into the garden's research. Until 24 October, 10am-4.30pm (11am Sundays). Admission free. Weston Library, Bodleian Libraries, Broad Street, Oxford OX1 3BG. Tel 01865 277094, visit.bodleian.ox.ac.uk

4 Bring Into Being

An experimental programme of art commissions, events and site-specific installations – including Jaimini Patel's *Matter as the densest form of energy – energy as the lightest form of matter*, 2021 (shown), created from organic materials collected from the gardens – will fill the 18th-century gardens over the summer. Until 31 October, Thursday to Sunday, 10am-4pm. From £11. Tel 020 3141 3350, chiswickhouseandgardens.org.uk

5 Unforgettable Gardens – The Indian influence on Gardens of Portugal

Cristina Castel-Branco, professor of Landscape Architecture at the University of Lisbon, explores the Indian influence on 16th-century Portuguese gardens in this online lecture for the Historic Gardens Foundation and Gardens Trust. 30 June, 6pm. £5. eventbrite.co.uk

6 Bishop's Palace & Garden Festival

Browse the many stalls featuring nurseries, food, drink and garden gifts in the beautiful gardens of the Bishop's Palace in Wells. 2-4 July, 10am-5pm. From £12.50. The Bishop's Palace & Gardens, Wells, Somerset BA5 2PD. Tel 01749 988111, bishopspalace.org.uk

7 Peter Lamb Art Exhibition

Discover the work of self-taught wildlife, botanical and landscape artist Peter Lamb in this exhibition at Logan Botanic Garden. 1 July – 15 August, 10am-5pm. Admission free with garden entry of £7.50. Logan Botanic Garden, Port Logan, nr Stranraer, Dumfries and Galloway DG9 9ND. Tel 01776 860231, discoverscottishgardens.org

8 Post-wild Landscapes: Working with the Natural Process

Landscape consultant Jo McKerr offers a one-day masterclass on how to create a post-wild landscape at her own garden created on a brownfield site (see feature page 30). Speakers also include Marina Christopher of Phoenix Perennial Plants and water ecologist Jason Mitchell. 7 July, 10am-4.30pm. £160. gardenmasterclass.org

9 Rare Plant Fair

Find something that little bit different at the Rare Plant Fair. 11 July, 10.30am-4.30pm. £7.20. Winterbourne House and Garden, University of Birmingham, 58 Edgbaston Park Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 2RT. Tel 0121 414 3003, winterbourne.org.uk

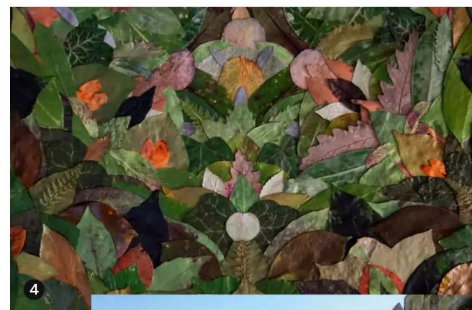
10 Belvoir Castle Flower and Garden Show

Don't miss the Belvoir Castle Flower and Garden Show with talks and plant stalls in the magnificent 'Capability' Brown parkland. 17-18 July, 9.45am-4.30pm. From £15. Belvoir Castle, Grantham, Lincolnshire NG32 1PE. Book online at eventbrite.co.uk

11 Brightling Down Farm

Book now for a guided tour of Brightling Down Farm in East Sussex in aid of garden charity Perennial. Designed by Acres Wild, this private garden in the Sussex High Weald includes a wonderful water garden, Japanese garden, woodland garden and walled vegetable garden. 9 September, 11am-3pm. £65. Tel 0800 093 8510, shop.perennial.org.uk

All information is correct at time of going to press, but may be subject to change. Tickets for most events will be limited to ensure social distancing and must be booked in advance. Please be sure to check all opening times and advice on any local travel restrictions before travelling.





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COMPILED BY KATIE BEALE

MAIN IMAGES DAVE CAUDERY



1. Waxed Organic Canvas Waist Apron, £49, subpod.co.uk 2. Stainless Steel Sandwich Box, large, olive, £32.95, 020 7633 0022, black-blum.com
 3. Shetland Wooden Hexagonal Wild Bee House, pine, £25, 01993 845559, gardentrading.co.uk 4. Slug Barrier, £14.99, 0844 441 3010, eckman.co.uk
 5. Hemp Pot, 5L, £1.99, 0117 934 1795, haxnicks.co.uk 6. Ikel Garden Tools (Pair), mango wood and iron, £39.95, 0333 240 0155, nkuku.com
 7. Beeswax Food Wraps, pack of three, £12.50, wildandstone.com 8. Hori Hori Japanese Trowel and Canvas Holster, £24, 01747 445059, niwaki.com



1. National Trust CJ Wildlife Sam Recycled Fat Ball Feeder, £3; Ultimate Fat Balls, £2.50, pack of six, both 0300 123 2025, shop.nationaltrust.org.uk; National Trust CJ Wildlife Anna Recycled Peanut Cake Feeder, £3.99; Peanut Cake Square, £2.49, both 0800 731 2820, birdfood.co.uk 2. Pennan Organic Cotton Zip Jumpsuit, dark olive, £135, 01872 554481, finisterre.com 3. Botanium Self-Watering Planter, laurel green, white smoke, ash grey, 13.5x25cm, £89.99 each, organiccatalogue.com 4. SylvaGrow Peat-Free Organic Compost, from £8.99 for 50L, 01666 502711, melcourt.co.uk 5. Parton Natural Bamboo Gardening Gloves, sage green, £12, 01228 217205, thistlewood.co.uk 6. Women's Sustainable Tall Wellington Boots, black, £49.95, 020 8350 1130, lakelandfootwear.co.uk

Martin Hughes-Games (below) has called the Finches Friend a "brilliant innovation".



INTERNATIONAL PATENTS PENDING

HELPING FINCHES IN A PINCH

With wild birds threatened by disease, a new feeder offers a safer way to welcome avian visitors into your garden

Watching birds flit about a feeder is one of the pleasures of having a garden. But when it comes to the species we love, are we killing them with kindness?

The answer, unfortunately, could be yes. Huge numbers of wild birds have been lost in recent decades to a parasitic disease commonly transmitted on bird feeders. This disease, known as trichomonosis, typically affects finches – the British Trust for Ornithology

estimates that between 2006 and 2015, trichomonosis wiped out nearly three million greenfinches in the UK.

"As well as greenfinches, many other birds including house sparrows, siskin, chaffinches and bullfinches are affected," says natural history TV presenter Martin Hughes-Games.

Two people who saw first-hand how quickly trichomonosis can affect a wild bird population are Dick and Tina Woods from Kent. The couple loved the 60 or so finches, particularly greenfinches,

that flocked to their feeders. Then, over a few weeks in 2016, all the greenfinches died.

The Woods were shocked. Spurred into action, they found out more about trichomonosis and how it spreads, and Dick decided to do something about it. With more than 40 years' industrial design and manufacture experience, he took on the challenge with enthusiasm.

An effective way to lower trichomonosis transmission is through good hygiene at feeding stations. Damp food can encourage the spread of the parasite, and feeders should be

cleaned weekly, but most are fiddly to take apart and reassemble. So Dick set about designing a bird-friendly, easy-clean feeder.

"The key was separating the feed store from where the birds feed," says Dick, as where birds perch tends to be where the disease is passed on. After four years of research

and development, he 3D-printed a feeder that solves the problem. Dick now works with a local injection-moulding firm to produce two commercial, recyclable versions with a low carbon footprint: a large feeder that can hold four types of feed, and a smaller version with two feed chambers.

The Finches Friend Cleaner Feeder is built to last and has a feed station that's easily removed as well as a storage section that keeps seed dry. Each feeder comes with a spare feed station so you can use a clean one while you wash the other.

Dick and Tina have already seen the benefits of the Cleaner Feeder in their own garden. "The Finches Friend feeders worked," says Dick. "The greenfinches returned." ■



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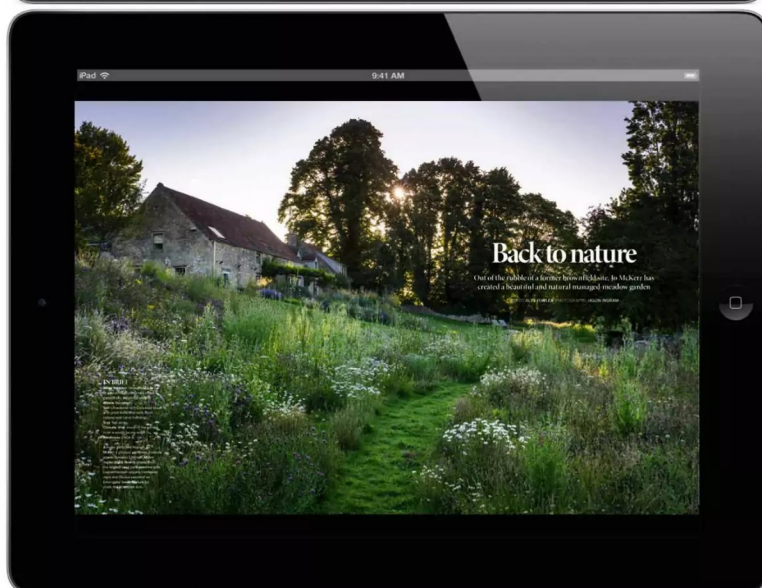
For more information, visit finchesfriend.com

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GARDENS OF INSPIRATION

There's a lot you can learn from visiting other people's gardens; let Aaron introduce you to those that have inspired him most

WORDS AARON BERTELSEN ILLUSTRATION ALICE PATULLO

For many people, gardening has been a huge source of comfort during the pandemic, and I am no exception. To be able to come out every day into the vegetable garden or kitchen courtyard and lose myself in the daily work of cultivation is a privilege, and I am well aware of just how lucky I am.

Nevertheless, there are things I have missed, among them the ability to visit other gardens. Seeing what other people are growing, and how they use what they grow in the kitchen is what gives me fresh ideas and feeds my energy and enthusiasm. While true freedom to travel remains tantalisingly out of reach, I thought I would take you on a deckchair tour of some of the gardens that have inspired me over the years.

The first stop on our virtual tour takes me back in time, as well as across continents, to my grandfather's vegetable garden on the northwest coast of Auckland, New Zealand. Covering two acres, it was immensely productive, thanks to the climate and the

rich, dark, volcanic soil. I can still remember the flavour of the lettuces he grew – perhaps that is the source of my great love of salads. He also passed on a valuable lesson – that vegetable gardening takes work, and what you get out depends on the effort you put in.

A garden I have very much missed during lockdown is the one belonging to my sister, who lives on the Gold Coast of Australia. There is nothing grand about the place – a small vegetable patch, carved out of a typical suburban garden – but it is a great lesson in just how much you can pack in to a small space. What I also find fascinating is just how quickly everything grows – seeds seem to germinate overnight and radishes can be ready to eat in less than two weeks. Being in a hot climate, she is mindful of water consumption, and uses only grey water for the garden – something we will all need increasingly to be aware of in the future.

I am also eager to return to Glenmore House, just outside Sydney. Mickey Robertson is a woman after my own heart. As an interior designer she also has a



wonderful talent for connecting the inside with the outside – from every window in her house, there is the most beautiful view of the garden, something I had in mind when developing my courtyard garden. I also love her attention to detail and the sense of ceremony and celebration she brings to the simplest meals, through her selection of beautiful linens, china and cutlery. These are the things that elevate the ordinary, and bring joy and pleasure to everyday life.

example by sharing seeds and plants – and, of course, food.

elegant country house hotel. I am lucky that my great friend Tom Coward is the head gardener so I am able to visit often. It is never disappointing. The oval vegetable garden is surrounded by a 3m sandstone wall, creating a wonderful sheltered environment where Tom and his team grow fruit and vegetables that supply the hotel kitchen year round. The constant dialogue between the garden and the kitchen is a never-ending source of inspiration for both sides – just as it should be.

Find Aaron's recipe for beetroot hummus at gardensillustrated.com/recipes

Paul's walking no longer an uphill battle thanks to **TURMERIC+**

Walking is one of the most beneficial forms of exercise, and also one of the most underestimated in terms of well-being. It's a great way to reach the recommended level of physical activity needed to stay healthy without the toll to joints, ligaments and muscles that more demanding sports exact.

When taking longer walks however, some of us can experience skeletal and muscular discomfort. Paul Goddard, 62, a Nordic Walking instructor from Saffron Walden in Essex, swears by a product called Turmeric+ as an effective means of keeping him active.

"I decided to become a Nordic Walking instructor in 2009 and started walking forty to fifty miles a week. Two years ago it became uncomfortable to walk distances that should have been easy for someone of my age and fitness levels. I felt very apprehensive as walking is not only my passion, but my business."

Paul continues: "I started doing

some research. I learned that turmeric could be helpful and bought supplements ... and then stumbled upon Turmeric+."

Curcumin, the active ingredient in turmeric, is difficult for the body to absorb. Some turmeric products offer high levels of curcumin but unless this is easily absorbed by the body, the higher amounts make little difference.

The need for easy absorption is what led the scientists at FutureYou Cambridge to create Turmeric+ using the patented 'Curcuma Phospholipid Complex' formulation. It's thirty times more absorbable than standard turmeric and contains vitamin C, which



"Soon after taking it I experienced that 'light-bulb' moment"

contributes to normal collagen formation for the normal function of cartilage.

"Soon after taking it I experienced that 'light-bulb' moment - I realised my knees felt like they used to. I take Turmeric+ religiously now. I walk around two hundred miles a month and even my customers have remarked on my mobility.

"Walking is great for fitness as well as your mental health. Being able to walk easily has

made a huge difference to my life and I feel fitter now than I did twenty years ago."

Adam Cleevely, CEO of FutureYou Cambridge comments;

"We want to support more people to get active and we think Turmeric+ can play an important role in that journey. We have tens of thousands of happy Turmeric+ subscribers who regularly tell us about their positive stories, just like Paul."

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Turmeric+, was developed in Cambridge with the backing of a scientific advisory board including luminaries such as Dr

Nicholas Shenker, a leading rheumatologist and chronic

pain expert at Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (Addenbrooke's). The formulation is thirty times more absorbable than standard turmeric, and also contains vitamin C which contributes to normal collagen formation for the normal function of cartilage.

Since launching the product the company has continually received positive feedback from happy customers, particularly on Trustpilot, the independent online review platform.

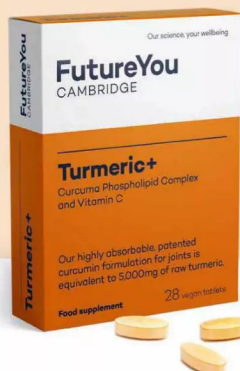
'As far as I'm concerned this stuff is magic... Highly recommend!' wrote one 5 star

reviewer. 'The product appears to meet all its promises and the service levels from FutureYou are first class,' said another.

'We're very happy to give people their first pack for free so they can experience it for themselves,' says Adam Cleevely, the company's CEO.

'It might sound bonkers but it really isn't. We're that confident in the effectiveness of our formulation.

'I can't think of a better way to convince people. If they like it, they will stick with it. Tens of thousands of customers already do.'



To claim your free 28 day Turmeric+ subscription trial pack worth £16.80, visit **FutureYouOffers.co.uk** or freephone **0800 808 5740** quoting code **TF645**

If it's not for you, simply cancel your subscription at any time, without obligation.

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GARDENING TALENT

STEWART TURTILL

As a trainee on English Heritage's Historic and Botanic Garden Training Programme, Stewart is part of the team at Audley End House and Gardens

PORTRAIT ANDREW MONTGOMERY

First plant love My first plant love was *Araucaria araucana*. When I was 19, I was exploring Bodnant Gardens with friends when we came across one of these trees. One friend told me of her passion for collecting cones from conifers, and that she hadn't got one from the monkey puzzle because they break down still attached to the tree. It then became my mission to collect an intact cone for her, and because of that I fell in love with this tree myself.

Who has inspired your career the most? And why? Natalie Chivers and Rosie Kressman, who both work at Treborth Botanic Garden in Bangor, had a huge influence on the start of my career. Their passion and enthusiasm for the plants they grow and the garden they tend really inspired me. They really pushed me, giving me a paid internship, and gave me all the advice to get me where I am now when I had no clue how to start my career.

Most worthwhile tips for every gardener Always keep learning and never be disheartened when something goes wrong. Gardening is such a vast and ever-changing prospect that there will always be something you don't know or a plant you haven't heard of. Also, always try new methods of doing things; this can help if something does go wrong in the garden.

Favourite 'weed' you're happy to have in your garden I know it's controversial, but I like lawn weeds. I like seeing *Trifolium repens* and *Bellis perennis* coming up in the grass along with *Ranunculus repens*. I'm passionate about environmental conservation, which encourages this fondness for lawn weeds.

One easy thing that every gardener can do to be more sustainable in their gardening The best thing you can do in your garden is make your own compost. It's a simple and easy thing to do. It may take a little bit of time to set it up and get your first batch, but once you're there it's the gift that keeps on giving.

What would you really like to achieve in your gardening career? I'm only at the start, so this is a very exciting time for me. I'd like to work towards becoming an ambassador for making large-scale professional gardening more sustainable and ecologically friendly, working with organisations such as the Seed Saving Network.

Useful information The Historic and Botanic Garden Training Programme offers a 12-month paid placement for gardeners in a UK-based historic or botanic garden. The next application slot opens in March 2022. To find out more visit hbgt.org.uk



The best thing
you can do in your
garden is make your
own compost



IN BRIEF

What A former brownfield site in a rural location turned into a naturalistic haven for wildlife.

Where Somerset.

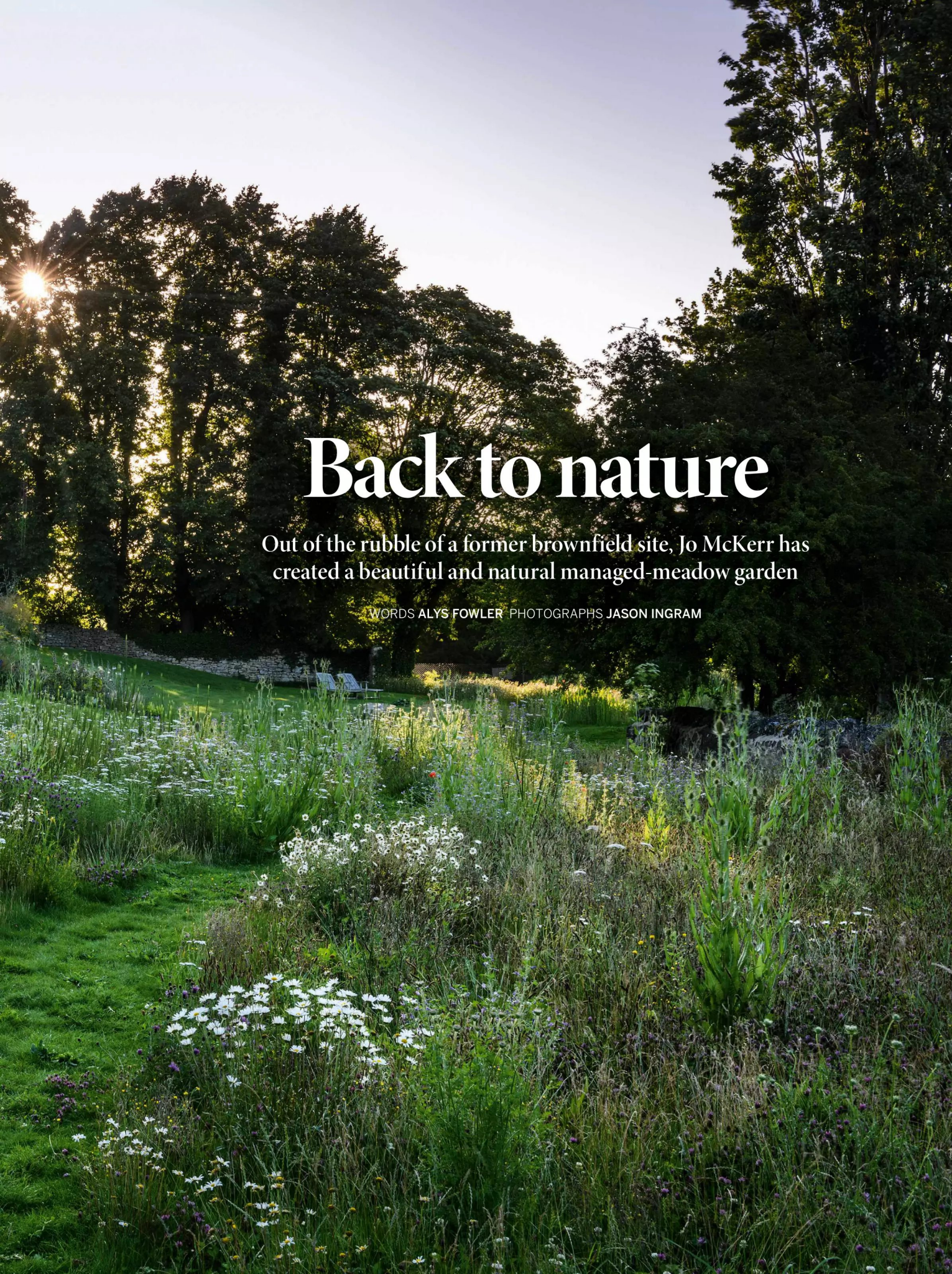
Soil Limestone-rich Cotswold brash with post-industrial soils from railway and canal building.

Size Two acres.

Climate Mild, much of the garden is on a south-facing slope.

Hardiness USDA 8.

A mown path cuts through Jo McKerr's glorious wildflower meadow where *Dipsacus fullonum*, *Malva neglecta* and *Reseda luteola* from the original seed bank combine with *Leucanthemum vulgare*, *Centaurea nigra* and *Daucus carota* from an Emorsgate Seeds mixture for an chalk and limestone soils.



Back to nature

Out of the rubble of a former brownfield site, Jo McKerr has created a beautiful and natural managed-meadow garden

WORDS ALYS FOWLER PHOTOGRAPHS JASON INGRAM





When you look down on Jo McKerr's wonderful meadows and over to the hills beyond it is easy to get seduced into romantic notions about pastoral idylls. Her expansive naturalistic planting style means the garden teems with wildlife, pollinators buzz and at night bats swoop from her 70m-long abandoned canal tunnel on to this rich, biodiverse landscape. But it wasn't always this way.

"When we first came here the landscape was very much scarred by human intervention," explains Jo. Despite sitting bang in the middle of the countryside, it is actually a brownfield site, which at one point had housed a canal, hence the tunnel, a railway line and a dairy farm. "The landscape has been dug up, shifted, moved by cows, canals, trains and people, but it still retained such personality. On my first impression I completely fell in love with a place," she says.

That took some vision because the landscape was covered in brambles and pioneer species, the buildings were half renovated or not at all. What's more, when Jo and her husband first took on this mammoth task of renovating all the buildings and gardens, they hadn't realised Jo was pregnant. "By the time we got the keys I was actually heavily pregnant, but it was a great gift really. I had two years to just dream about what I wanted for the garden,

To continue turn to page 36 ►

Behind the house a grape-covered arbour provides a sheltered space for outdoor dining with views to the wildflower meadows beyond. Near the house the borders offer an Oudolf-esque matrix mix of perennials that includes *Alchemilla mollis*, *Althea cannabina*, *Eryngium x zabelii* 'Big Blue', *Nepeta racemosa* 'Walker's Low', *Oenothera stricta* 'Sulphurea', *Verbena hastata* f. *rosea* and *Allium sphaerocephalon*.

If people are going to
adopt wilder-looking
design for wildlife, then it
needs to look very good



Above The borders to the rear of Jo's house are filled with *Dierama pulcherrimum*, angel's fishing rods, which dance above *Achillea* 'Moonshine'. Behind these, in an area that bakes in the afternoon sun, tower cardoons and the soft grass *Stipa gigantea*.



Below Close to the house, planting is slightly more ornamental with grasses mingling with the tall, yellow spikes of *Verbascum bombyciferum* 'Polarsommer', alongside *Echium vulgare*, *Salvia* 'Blue Spire', *Phlomis russeliana* and euphorbias.



Above The dining area close to the house is shielded by a mix of tall *Echinops bannaticus* 'Taplow Blue' and *Eryngium x zabelii* 'Jos Eijking'. Much of Jo's perennial borders, like her wildflower meadows beyond, are allowed to self-seed and regenerate naturally.



Below Jo is passionate about wildlife and her borders are filled with plants that attract insects. Here these include fennel, *Nepeta racemosa* 'Walker's Low', *Allium sphaerocephalon*, the round-headed leek, and evening primrose, *Oenothera stricta* 'Sulphurea'.

▷ I could work out what needed unpicking and observe the detail already there, where the ferns were growing in damper shade, for example. Time is really the greatest gift for a garden.”

So, for the first 18 months, they did a little land shifting to shape the garden, covered it with black plastic to suppress the brambles, planted a native hedge around the edge of the garden, added hazel and crab apple trees and then left it while they worked on the house. In this time, Jo started to wonder if it was possible to make a garden where you couldn't quite tell where the garden stopped and the wider landscape started. She decided on native meadows and plantings that would help regenerate the existing seed bank. The soil is not particularly fertile and in places deeply compacted, which lent itself to wildflower meadows. “It's essentially derelict land lacking in nitrogen, but that actually means more possibilities; the dynamic of poor soil is actually something great to work with.”

Jo has done lots of research in bioremediation: “By using meadow plants we are essentially cleaning up the site, making it more holistic and wholesome. But as a design tool this is really interesting because you're also making an ecological memory bank. In 20 years' time it will have a very different seed bank than now, the meadows will change, the landscape will evolve but you can build that into your design,” she explains.

The garden is a series of different matrices because this brings in diversity and creates resilience across the whole system. Around the house it is at its most ornamental in a traditional sense, while the main garden ▷

Making the most of the good drainage provided by the steep bank beneath the wall, Jo has introduced a thyme meadow that tumbles down into the main meadow mix from Emorsgate Seeds, which is based down the road from Jo's farmhouse. The tall spires of *Verbascum thapsus* add vertical accents that link to the tower of the 14th-century village church beyond.

A photograph of a lush meadow filled with wildflowers, including white daisies, purple flowers, and yellow buttercups. In the background, there are several green trees and a stone church tower with a crenellated top and a weather vane. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

By using meadow plants
we are essentially cleaning
up the site, making it more
holistic and wholesome



Above The pond offers a focal point for the long, sloping lawn and draws the eye to the middle ground. It is planted up to attract wildlife, such as dragonflies and damselflies, with *Pontederia cordata*, bulrushes, loosestrife, meadowsweet and waterlilies.



Below In the sunny gravel garden situated to the front of the house, plants suited to the hot, dry conditions, including *Verbena bonariensis*, *Erigeron karvinskianus*, *Oenothera stricta*, the grass *Stipa tenuissima*, fennel and verbascums, are allowed to self-seed freely.



▷ is composed of a large, naturalistic pond and the many meadows. “We did some earthworks at the start, we created the slope in part to use up all the rubble and made a reclaimed wall to keep the neighbour’s garden from falling into ours,” she laughs. Throughout these spaces all the material from the stone, to the timber beams for seating is carefully reclaimed and recycled in keeping with her environmental ethic.

At the start of the meadows under a walnut tree is a spring meadow of cowslips, white violets and *Crocus tommasinianus* that blends into a bank of a herbal meadow full of thyme and origanum, then the garden rolls out into summer meadows. The meadows are cut in rotation, starting with the spring ones and ending with the railway lines meadow that sits next to the hedgerow. “By cutting in rotation we can allow the wildlife somewhere to move on to and it means we don’t need to use a lot of machinery,” Jo explains.

Although traditionally managed, the meadows are not grassland. “They are gardenised meadows, which means they are managed for flowers and effect. They are deliberately meant to look beautiful and aspirational, because I believe if people are going to adopt wilder-looking design for wildlife, then it needs to look very good.” ■

USEFUL INFORMATION

Find out more about Jo’s work at jomckerr.com

In the gravel garden at the side of the house, Jo has used a planting palette that complements the house’s Cotswold stone with grasses, such as *Stipa tenuissima*, and perennials including *Verbascum bombyciferum* ‘Polarsommer’ and oreganums. This sunny space also includes a greenhouse for propagating plants and a couple of raised beds for vegetables.

Showing its mettle

When Kim and Rob Hurst decided to create a private garden next to their nursery on a former farm they turned history to their advantage, repurposing an old Dutch barn into a plant support extraordinaire

WORDS NATASHA GOODFELLOW PHOTOGRAPHS JASON INGRAM

IN BRIEF

Name The Garden at Field Farm.

What Private garden with adjoining nursery specialising in herbs, and aromatic and scented foliage plants.

Where Worcestershire.

Size One acre.

Soil Improved clay, with added sandy topsoil.

Climate Warm, temperate climate, and an exposed, windy site.

Hardiness zone USDA 9.

A cloud-pruned hedge of *Lonicera ligustrina* var. *yunnanensis* divides the gravel garden around the former silo from the sweeping perennial beds. The grass pathway is flanked by clumps of *Nepeta* 'Six Hills Giant' and *Stipa tenuissima*, which give on to an eye-catching mix of plants, including *Baptisia australis*, *Lupinus* 'Noble Maiden', *Crocasmia* 'Lucifer', *Miscanthus sinensis* and various peonies.





At the Garden at Field Farm in Worcestershire, the imposing skeleton of an old barn, once home to the farm's hop-picking machinery, looms over the site. At one end, the arched roof provides shelter and ample space for a large dining table and benches; at the other, rusted columns provide elegant and unique support to a scramble of roses (*Rosa* 'Rambling Rector', *R. filipes* 'Kiftgate' and *R.* 'Seagull'), and climbers including Virginia creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*), *Jasminum beesianum* and an enormous Russian vine (*Fallopia baldschuanica*).

"Initially, we were going to take the barn down," says owner Kim Hurst, who moved here with her husband Rob, to his grandfather's farm, in 2009, the pair having run their herb-based nursery, The Cottage Herbery, on land next door since 1976. "But I have a fondness for rusty metal and one day, just before the roof came off, it hit me that I had the most fantastic plant frame here. I thought, 'This could be a cathedral to plants.'"

The project took four years to complete before the first plants went in. "It took an entire winter just to clear the sheds of rubbish and machinery," says Kim. "We kept finding bits of ploughs, tractors and concrete."

All work had to be done in spare hours over the quieter (and colder) winter months. By 2012, Rob had cleared the land, tilled it and added mountains of their own organic, peat-free compost (a formula Rob had developed commercially in the late 1980s) and well-drained, sandy topsoil to improve the drainage. Then they grassed the lot and left it for a year, to check there was no concrete seepage or oil residues.

The slow progress gave Kim time to plan and when she could begin planting, she knew exactly what she wanted. Inspired by Beth Chatto's gravel garden and fed up with the water-retentive clay of her previous plot, she wanted to grow plants that liked to have their feet dry and so she planned the space with a discrete gravel garden by ▷

Above A rusted sheet of corrugated iron makes a stunning backdrop to the vibrant planting of *Geum* Scarlet Tempest (= 'Macgeu001'), *Salvia nemorosa* 'Caradonna', *Campanula persicifolia* var. *alba*, *Nepeta parnassica* and a self-seeded purple lupin. The tall buds (bottom right) are salsify (*Tragopogon porrifolius*).

Above right Grass paths connect a number of irregular beds, each with a different mood. In the foreground, a smaller gravel bed showcases a hard-pruned *Lupinus arboreus* and the ferny foliage and white umbels of *Ligusticum lucidum*. Beyond, *Geum* 'Totally Tangerine' shines among plantings of *Peltaria alliacea* and *Aquilegia vulgaris* var. *stellata* 'Black Barlow'.

Right *Angelica archangelica*, *Cynara cardunculus* and *Thalictrum* 'Elin' grow in the shady, moisture-retentive soil in the lee of the iron wall. In the foreground, *Miscanthus sinensis*, *Crocsmia* 'Lucifer' and various asters create interest through their contrasting forms and colours.



Plants are chosen for their strong growth and low maintenance. When the nursery is at full pelt we don't want things that cause a lot of work

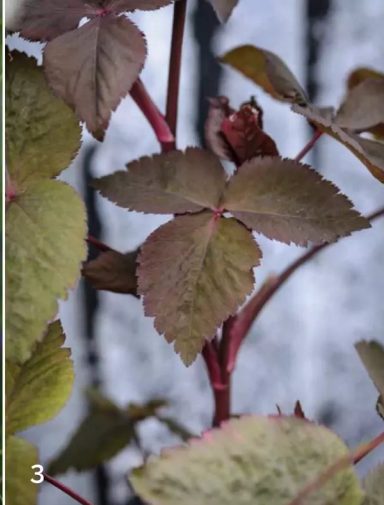




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24 KEY PLANTS

1 Tulbaghia 'Hazel'
An unusually coloured *Tulbaghia* hybrid. In common with other species in this genus the flowers are edible, and in this case they are also strongly scented. 40cm. RHS H3†.

2 Consolida regalis 'Blue Cloud'
A far cry from the usual columnar delphiniums, this forking larkspur produces a bushy plant with clouds of delicate, blue flowers. Easy to grow from seed. 60cm. RHS H3-H4.

3 Cryptotaenia japonica f. atropurpurea
This delicious, desirable, purple Japanese parsley is good raw in salads and the bronze leaves and red stems make a handsome foil to other plants. 1m. RHS H4.

4 Orlaya grandiflora
Its clusters of white flowers above ferny foliage look like lace-cap hydrangeas. Kim loves to fling seeds of this hardy annual around the border to see where it comes up. 65cm. AGM*, RHS H7.

5 Stachys recta
Pale, lemon-yellow flowers appear on dense, upright stems in June and continue until October. A good filler and much loved by bees. 30cm. RHS H3-H4.

6 Allium siculum
Fantastic for bees and interesting at every stage of its development, from the arrow-headed buds in their silk-thin sheaths to the clusters of drooping, bell-like flowers. 75cm. RHS H7.

7 Iris 'Parisian Dawn'
Apricot petals with tangerine beards and mauve bands on the ruffled falls make this a real eye-catcher in the border. It flowers prolifically too, lasting for up to six weeks. 90cm.

8 Persicaria x fennica 'Johanniswolke'
The giant, white, fleece flower is a statuesque plant with a froth of foamy blooms on attractive, dark stems. Doesn't run and turns a nice bronze as it ages. 2m. AGM. RHS H6, USDA 4a-9b.

9 Eryngium bourgatii
With their silvery colour and spiky form, eryngiums are always striking plants. This species has deeply lobed, marbled leaves and pale-blue, cone-like flowers. Leave the seedheads for the finches. 45cm. RHS H5, USDA 5a-8b.

10 Lysimachia atropurpurea 'Beaujolais'
Kim likes the quirky form and grey-green foliage of the crimson loosestrife, which she pairs with shorter grasses such as *Stipa tenuissima*. 60cm. RHS H6, USDA 4a-8b.

11 Rosa 'Rambling Rector'
A super-healthy, super-vigorous rose, tough enough to withstand exposed conditions and able to cling on to the old barn's stanchions. 7.5m. AGM. RHS H6.

12 Allium atropurpureum
A hardy perennial bulb with a rich, dark hue that lifts other plants well. 60cm. RHS H5.

24 key plants continues on page 47.



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▷ the house and around the old silo (also retained), and with sweeping beds under and beyond the barn leading the eye out to the Cleve Hills beyond.

“To be able to grow things such as eryngiums, echinops and *Dianthus cruentus* is just lovely,” she says. “And grasses too. I’d never grown them before, and they bring such texture and movement to the garden.”

Of course, herbs – Kim’s first love – play a major part too, appearing in both their native and ornamental forms by the dozen. “I’ve always been completely hooked on these plants that can do so much, flavouring our foods, scenting our homes and lifting our spirits,” she says. “Over time I’ve become interested in other cultivars that come from the species. *Echinacea purpurea* started off so humbly as a treatment for common coughs and colds – now there are hundreds of ornamental cultivars with a huge range of colours and forms.”

Indeed, the nursery’s closely spaced, 12-page plant list details at least 18 different types, from *Echinacea pallida* ‘Hula Dancer’, with its drooping skirt of palest pink, to the double pompoms of *E. ‘Marmalade’* in striking, two-tone orange. Sanguisorbas (“fantastic at withstanding the wind”) appear in at least 20 different cultivars, and there are 12 different types of nepeta, six different types of rosemary and seven each of thyme and lavender. Less well-known herbs feature too: Kim uses the highly aromatic *Meum athamanticum* as much for its vibrant-green, fern-like foliage as its delicate, creamy umbels.

Many of the plants are good for pollinators, a key concern for Kim who has always gardened organically, and all are chosen for their strong growth and low ▷

I’ve always been completely hooked on these plants that can do so much, flavouring our food, scenting our homes and lifting our spirits

Above The red tussock grass (*Chionochloa rubra*) makes a striking focal point in this border, surrounded by plantings of *Salvia nemorosa* ‘Caradonna’, *Geum* ‘Totally Tangerine’, *Digitalis purpurea* ‘Sutton’s Apricot’ and ‘Snow Thimble’, and a purple lupin selected from seed.



▷ maintenance. “The nursery is at full pelt from late March onwards,” she says, “so we don’t want plants that are going to cause us a lot of work.”

With that in mind, Kim will now grow only three monarda cultivars – *Monarda* ‘Jacob Cline’, *M.* ‘Gardenview Scarlet’ and *M.* ‘Violacea’ – and tries to deadhead alliums, another of her great loves, before they have the chance to set seed. Other than that, the main tasks are simply thinning seedlings early in the year and again in February; the cutting back of the alchemilla and nepeta in early August and then, in late autumn, everything bar the grasses is chopped back hard. “We cut right to the ground,” says Kim, “and, as you can see, it flourishes.”

The lowest-maintenance, and Kim’s favourite, area is the gravel garden where greater quaking grass (*Briza maxima*), *Verbena bonariensis*, cerinthe and bupleurum happily self-seed among the stones. “It’s my absolute joy,” says Kim. “It’s true I also feel a great need to grow as many different things as possible,” she laughs. ■

USEFUL INFORMATION

Address The Cottage Herbery, Field Farm, Knighton-on-Teme, Tenbury Wells, Worcestershire WR15 8LT. **Tel** 01584 781785. **Web** thecottageherbery.co.uk

Open The garden and nursery are open for pre-booked group visits only between May and August, and on special open days. Please email thecottageherbery@gmail.com if you are interested in visiting. An online shop is also available from March to August, with local delivery or pre-arranged collection of orders.

**It’s lovely
to grow things
like grasses that
I hadn’t grown
before. They
bring such
texture and
movement to
the garden**

Above The gravel garden features a relaxed composition of plants including *Stipa tenuissima*, *Lavandula angustifolia* ‘Nana Alba’, *Thymus serpyllum* ‘Vey’ and *Artemisia herba-alba*. Nearer the house and barn are *Briza maxima*, *Cerinthe major* var. *purpurascens*, *Verbena bonariensis* and *Bupleurum longifolium*.



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24 KEY PLANTS CONTINUED

13 *Digitalis x mertonensis* 'Summer King'

Shorter than some other foxgloves, but no less interesting with its tubular flowers the colour of crushed strawberries. 75cm. RHS H5.

14 *Lepidium sativum*

A self-seeding, hardy annual with white, frothy flowers, followed by unusual, silvery-grey seedpods. Dries well and good for threading through the border. 1m. RHS H7.

15 *Phlomis tuberosa*

Very easy to mix in with other plants, this bears pale-purple flowers (which fade beautifully) on purple stems above a mat of green leaves. 1.25m. RHS H5, USDA 6a-9b.

16 *Gypsophila* 'Pink Festival'

This double form of baby's breath looks lovely at the front of the border, and has a romantic, softening effect. Cut it back hard for a second flowering. 1m. RHS H7.

17 *Gillenia trifoliata*

A medicinal herb that is also an attractive garden plant, with clouds of starry, white flowers with red calyces above healthy, green foliage. 75cm. AGM. RHS H7, USDA 4a-8b.

18 *Trifolium rubens* 'Peach Pink'

This non-invasive, clump-forming perennial from the clover family is a good choice for a hot, dry spot, where it will flower for weeks. 50cm. RHS H4-H5.

19 *Scrophularia grandiflora*

Perhaps the showiest member of the figwort family. Easy to grow from seed and reliably perennial, as long as it has well-drained soil. 1m. RHS H7.

20 *Pimpinella major* 'Rosea'

A herbaceous perennial with flat heads of tiny, pink flowers. Easily woven through other plants, it likes a sunny spot in free-draining soil. 1.2m. RHS H7, USDA 5a-8b.

21 *Peltaria alliacea*

An evergreen, hardy perennial with dark-bronze, edible leaves tasting of garlic, hence its common name 'garlic cress'. 60cm. RHS H6.

22 *Allium scorodoprasum* 'Art'

Kim likens this bulb to Medusa and calls it her 'bad hair day allium'. Prefers full sun and has a tendency to spread. 50cm. RHS H5.

23 *Geum* 'Totally Tangerine'

A really good 'doer' of a plant that flowers for months. Even when it goes over, the spiky spent heads are attractive. 90cm. RHS H7, USDA 5a-7b.

24 *Echium vulgare*

Bees and many other pollinators adore viper's bugloss, which is a prolific flowerer and will self-seed freely if left unchecked. 75cm. RHS H7, USDA 4a-8b.

*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society. *Hardiness ratings given where available.



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A selection of perpetual flowering carnations, including the velvety-red *Dianthus* 'Old Rose Pelargonium', create a colourful display in Jim Marshall's Suffolk greenhouse. Although they do well in pots out of doors, they are best grown under glass.

Perpetual bliss

Perpetual flowering carnations were once hugely popular have fallen out of fashion. Jim Marshall is on a mission to persuade gardeners to rediscover their charms

WORDS TROY SCOTT SMITH PHOTOGRAPHS JASON INGRAM

Engelmann and Allwoods soon started growing perpetual flowering carnations and bred new cultivars. By the 1930s they had become the dominant glasshouse carnation

The genus *Dianthus* belongs to the family Caryophyllaceae, which comprises 80 genera and 3,000 species. *Dianthus caryophyllus*, the original carnation, is endemic to southern Europe and was introduced into England about the time of the Norman Conquest.

The group of *Dianthus* known as perpetual flowering carnations are a result of crosses between *D. caryophyllus* and *D. chinensis* and originated in France at the turn of the 19th century. They have a branching habit and produce a flower at the end of each branch and, as their name suggests, bloom throughout the year.

In the early 20th century carnation production was centred in the USA, and one of the most popular series of all time, the Sim series, was developed by Massachusetts breeder William Sim, a Scottish immigrant. In the UK, the nurseries of Engelmann and Allwoods soon started growing them and bred new cultivars. By the 1930s they had become the dominant glasshouse carnation, superseding the popular Malmaison carnations. These more fragrant carnations originated in France in the mid-19th century and became fashionable in the UK in the Edwardian era when they were grown in the glasshouses of many aristocrats. Offering large blooms with split calyces and a distinctive aroma of cloves, they flower only once in the summer for a short period.

Jim Marshall, a former garden adviser to the National Trust, holds National Collections of both Malmaison and perpetual flowering carnations in his garden in Suffolk. Jim's association with carnations is a long one. His grandfather, a keen amateur gardener, grew border carnations in his Edinburgh garden, and one of Jim's first jobs in horticulture was for a commercial nursery that grew many of the Sims varieties, but his own collection of the perpetual types is relatively new and one he acquired almost by chance. He was already the holder of the National Collection of Malmaisons, when in 2011 he received a call from the head gardener of a private estate in Suffolk. The gardener was no longer able to propagate from the estate's large and historic collection of perpetual carnations and needed help. Knowing that all carnations are prone to virus, Jim suspected this was the problem and sent samples for micropropagation to a laboratory in Dundee to eliminate the virus completely.

As a result within four years all 13 cultivars from the Suffolk estate and a further eight cultivars from other sources had become virus free, and in return for his help the estate gave Jim plants from each of the cultivars in its collection. These now

To continue turn to page 53 ►



Jim Marshall, who spent more than 25 years working for the National Trust as a gardens adviser, now lives in Suffolk where he holds the National Collections for both Malmaison and perpetual flowering carnations.

Dianthus 'Storm'

Beautifully coloured, like light sealed under a thunderous summer sky. Perfect as a specimen plant or grown en masse as a wash for the brighter carnations to play against. Little scent. 1.1m.





D. 'Velvet Pelargonium'

Raised by Allwoods nursery, this carnation with sumptuous maroon flowers shaded with purple has a heavy clove scent that fills the air. Blooms over a long period and lasts several weeks in a vase. 1.25m.



D. 'Royal Salmon'

An early cultivar raised by Allwoods nursery pre-1936 and given an RHS Award of Merit in 1946. Its dark salmon-coloured flowers fall between orange and pink depending on what you partner it with. 1.4m.



D. 'Duchess of Roxburghe'

Beautiful flowers typical of the button-hole carnation in the palest pink. Slightly curled, glaucous leaves add to its beauty as does its heavy perfumed scent. If you grow only one, this should be it. 1.4m.



D. 'Helena Allwood'

A reliable, fully double carnation with clean, white ground, striped a deep scarlet. One of the later carnations raised by Allwoods, it was given an RHS Award of Merit in 1952. Good scent. 1.25m.



D. 'Fragrant Ann'

A creamy-white carnation that more than lives up to its name, with a spicy, clove-like fragrance. Raised by an amateur gardener in Derby in 1953, it was awarded an RHS First Class Certificate in 1980. 1.4m.



D. 'Shot Silk'

Good-sized, fringed flowers with a chestnut ground, flaked, red-scarlet stripes and a good clove scent. One of Allwoods' earliest greenhouse carnations, it was given an RHS Award of Merit in 1925. 1.25m.



D. 'Doris Allwood'

Raised by Allwoods and named for Montague Allwood's wife Doris. Registered pre-1930, it was given an RHS Award of Merit in 1936. Beautifully coloured pink and blue grey and highly scented. 1.4m.



D. 'Purple Frosted'

A cultivar raised in the USA by WD Holley of Colorado State University. Light-purple ground that is edged white. Stiffer in the stem than some, but still requires staking. Only lightly scented. 1.25m.



D. 'Royal Crimson'

Raised in 1944 by Allwoods, the nursery responsible for many introductions, particularly the Allwoodii Group of pinks. It has a deep crimson colour with a good scent. 1.4m.



D. 'Northland'

A white carnation with a good scent. Introduced in the USA in 1939 by prolific breeder William Sim, who introduced the very popular range of Sim Carnations in the 1950s. 1.4m.

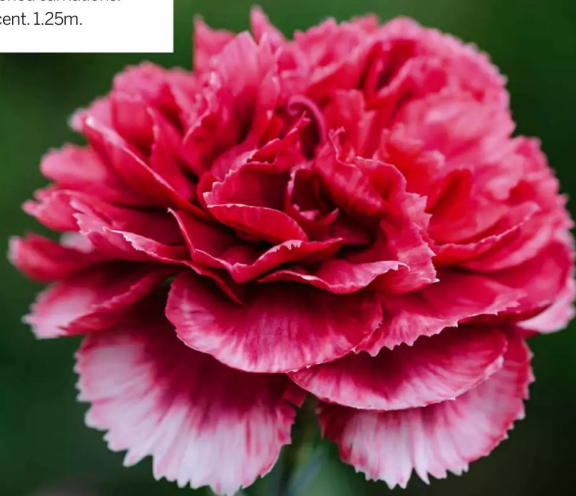


D. 'Monty's Pink'

Raised by Allwoods, and named for Montague Allwood, the eldest of the three brothers who started the company in 1910. Those named for the other two, George and Edward, are thought to be lost. 1.25m.

D. 'Old Rose Pelargonium'

One of Jim's favourites, raised by Allwoods nursery in 1950. Flowers are a wonderful old rose colour with nut-brown undertones. Works well in a vase with lighter toned carnations. Good scent. 1.25m.





Jim is on a one-man mission to bring these beautiful flowers back into fashion, regularly showing both his carnation collections, and propagating plants for sale

▷ form the basis of Jim's National Collection, which includes 17 cultivars bred and registered in the UK before 1970. Today he is on a one-man mission to bring these beautiful flowers back into fashion, regularly showing both his carnation collections, and propagating plants for sale.

Small-scale propagation is normally by stem cuttings taken from non-flowering 'mother plants' between February and October. Jim takes his cuttings in March, and starts them off in a propagator with a bottom heat of 15°C and some mist. Once they're rooted, normally after two to three weeks, he pots them on into a mixture of peat-free compost with added perlite and controlled-release fertiliser. Jim uses one-litre pots and stops the plants – meaning he takes out the central shoot – allowing approximately four shoots to run up. These are kept in a cold frame until the summer and when ready Jim pots on plants for either flowering or propagation.

Jim's potting mixture will take the plants through to spring, but from early April he gives a weak feed (high in potash) every three weeks, then when buds start appearing he gives a stronger feed every two weeks as the shoots run up to bloom. Overfeeding at an early stage can inhibit flowering, but generally cultivation is relatively simple. Plants require protection from the wet both during the winter and while flowering. As they grow up to 1.8m tall, they will need some form of support. The traditional method is a central bamboo stick pushed into the pot, attached to which are hoops. As the stems elongate, they grow through the hoops, not only stopping the stems from snapping but also helping to keep them straight.

The best blooms are obtained by 'disbudding' – only allowing the crown bud to flower. Timing is critical: too early and damage to the stem can be caused; too late and energy is wasted. When it comes to picking, Jim advises to come down seven buds to cut, and the shoots below will flower again in around four months. Jim keeps his plants for only one year, but they can be kept for longer. ■

USEFUL INFORMATION

Jim Marshall plans to open his garden on selected dates in early July. He also sells a selection of carnations, with funds going to support Plant Heritage. All plants will be propagated to order for dispatch in June 2022. Email Jim at jimmalmaisons@gmail.com for a plant catalogue or to arrange a visit to the garden.

WHERE TO BUY

• Allwoods

London Road, Hassocks,
West Sussex BN6 9NA.
Tel 01273 844229, allwoods.net



D. 'Marchioness of Headfort' Lightly scented flowers in salmon with white edges. Raised by JA Boyle, head gardener of Headfort House in County Meath, Ireland, and named for Rose Boote, the 4th Marchioness. 1.1m.

D. 'Earl Kelso' Registered by Jim Marshall in 2012, this sport of D. 'Duke of Norfolk'; has fully double, creamy-white flowers that are wide and shallowly toothed at the edges. A newer introduction that is well worth growing. 1.25m.

Greek odyssey

With his new design for Sissinghurst's Delos garden, Dan Pearson has returned to the original vision of Harold Nicolson and Vita Sackville-West

WORDS DAN PEARSON PHOTOGRAPHS JASON INGRAM





IN BRIEF

Name Delos.

What Mediterranean-inspired garden at Sissinghurst Castle.

Where Kent.

Size Quarter of an acre.

Soil An altered planting mix comprising ragstone gravel, crushed brick and poor-quality topsoil.

Climate Temperate.

Hardiness zone USDA 9.

More than 80 years since it was first conceived, Sissinghurst's Delos garden, in front of the Priest's House, has been transformed into a Mediterranean-style space in line with the original vision. To the right, the *Quercus coccifera* or kermes oak – a tree native to the Mediterranean – is an original from Vita and Harold's time. Grecian altars, originally acquired by Harold Nicolson, and original to the site, are placed along the main walkway.

For decades Delos felt like a part of Sissinghurst without a story. Flushing for a moment with spring bulbs, astrantias and martagon lilies, it was a shadowy place on the cold side of a tall wall and a poor neighbour to the brilliance of the White Garden. It was a garden that, through time and circumstance, had lost its way and lost the essence of what Vita Sackville-West and Harold Nicolson had originally dreamed of.

The couple loved the Mediterranean, its landscapes, plants and histories and in 1935 they visited Delos, a small rocky island in the Aegean, considered sacred in ancient Greek culture. The place where Apollo, the sun god, and his twin sister Artemis, goddess of the moon, were born. The remains of the old streets and buildings, now enmeshed with the native *phrygana* proved such a source of inspiration that, upon their return, Vita and Harold resolved to emulate the atmosphere of the island in one of the garden rooms.

Sissinghurst was known for its romanticism and as the meeting point of Harold's formal geometries and Vita's informal plantings. Each garden enclosure had a theme, but Delos must have felt very forward-thinking in its echoing of a real place and with its mood of somewhere wild and foreign. Though there are no plans to speak of, just letters and photographs, by 1937 the garden was mostly finished. It was built with limited resources and featured a repurposed wellhead, terraced beds, broken columns and false ruins made from the remains of demolished medieval and Elizabethan buildings. It also accommodated a number of Grecian altars acquired by Harold's great-grandfather, which he bought at auction when his family's Irish home was sold in 1936.

Vita wrote of the garden in 1942: 'The plan was inspired by the island of Delos, where the ruins of houses have left precisely this kind of little terrace, smothered there by mats of the wildflowers of Greece.' Sadly the establishment of the garden was hindered by a number of contributing factors. The Second World War was imminent and the head gardener and many of his team were called up, but core to the failure of the garden was its position. A north-facing slope on the wrong side of a high wall with underlying poorly drained Wealden clay. Vita and Harold were learning as they went and the site could not have been more different from the conditions they were hoping to mimic. By 1953 Vita wrote: 'This has not been a success so far, but perhaps some day it will come right.'

In 2018 Troy Scott Smith, who was then head gardener, approached me to help reinstate the original vision. Drawing extensively from archival documents, as well as notes and photographs made on a recent field trip to Delos by assistant gardener, Joshua Sparkes, we pieced together the elements we believed to be key to the original design, the central formality of the 'street', the inclusion of the existing well, the stepped terraces and the altars. Vita had enjoyed the distant views of the sea at Delos and so a viewing position at the highest part of the garden now provides a place where you can capture the long view over the Kentish weald and imagine the distant blue of the Aegean.

To ensure success it was imperative to address the conditions of the site. The north slope was mitigated with new terraces tilted to slope south and harvest the light. The clay was drained and new terraces enabled us to resoil the entire garden with a free-draining mix suitable to a palette of Mediterranean plants. Careful edits to the existing trees let in sunshine, although we retained an original and characterful *Quercus coccifera*.

The planting was designed to inhabit the bones of our new ruins, to feel as if it had arrived there of its own volition in the way that the native *phrygana* has on Delos. I spent two days with Olivier Filippi at his Mediterranean plant nursery in southern France to get best advice about a palette of Greek natives that would adapt to the British climate. We had addressed the drainage, but it was also important to confront the impact of climate change. Wetter winters and drier summers with no irrigation once the plants were established drove our plant selection. The National Trust has fully embraced this important, educational value of the garden.

Key trees were positioned to allow light to come into the garden uninterrupted. *Quercus suber*, *Cercis siliquastrum* and a specimen *Punica granatum* provide height, while the shrubby character of the wider Mediterranean *garrigue* provides evergreen structure with thymes, cistus and lavenders. Open areas have been deliberately left for ephemeral annuals and short-lived perennials, which will colonise the leftover places and crevices to give a feeling of ruins having been occupied by nature. It is a garden the Sissinghurst team will manage to become its own dynamic environment. A place that we hope will do justice to Harold and Vita's original vision. ■

USEFUL INFORMATION

Address Sissinghurst Castle, Biddenden Road, nr Cranbrook, Kent TN17 2AB. **Tel** 01580 710700.

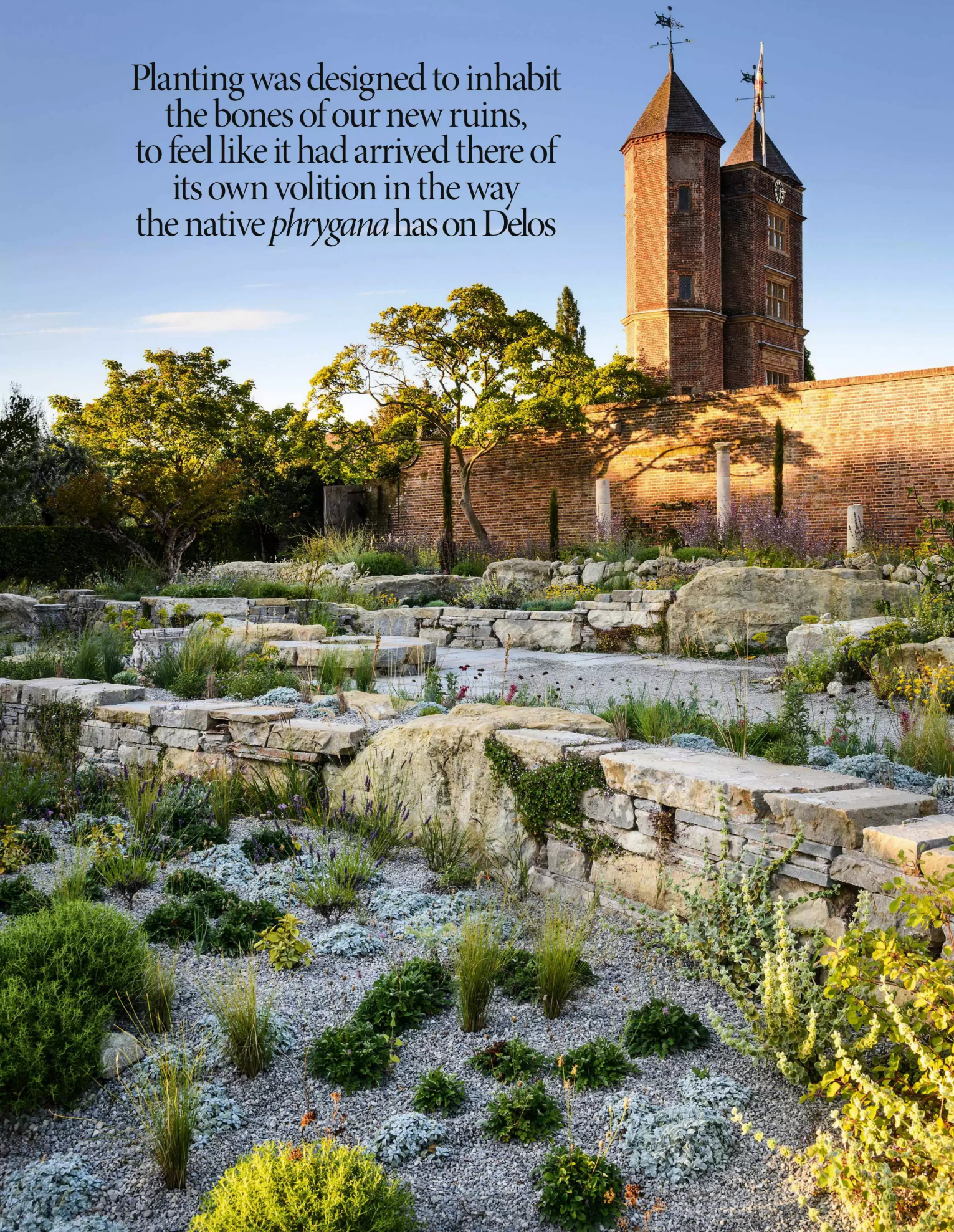
Web nationaltrust.org.uk/sissinghurst-castle-garden **Open** Daily, 11am-5.30pm. Admission £10.

Find out more about Dan's work at danpearsonstudio.com

Turn the page to see more of Delos and 12 of its key plants

Right Looking back towards Sissinghurst's iconic Tower, the pencil cypresses and stone columns echo its rectilinear form. *Ballota pseudodictamnus* is planted on the shady side of the low stone wall, while *Cymbalaria muralis* has already begun colonising in the cracks. The quince and magnolia on either side of the doorway to the Tower lawns are original. Clipped green forms act as visual anchor points to the more ethereal perennials that appear almost to float above

Planting was designed to inhabit
the bones of our new ruins,
to feel like it had arrived there of
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the native *phrygana* has on Delos





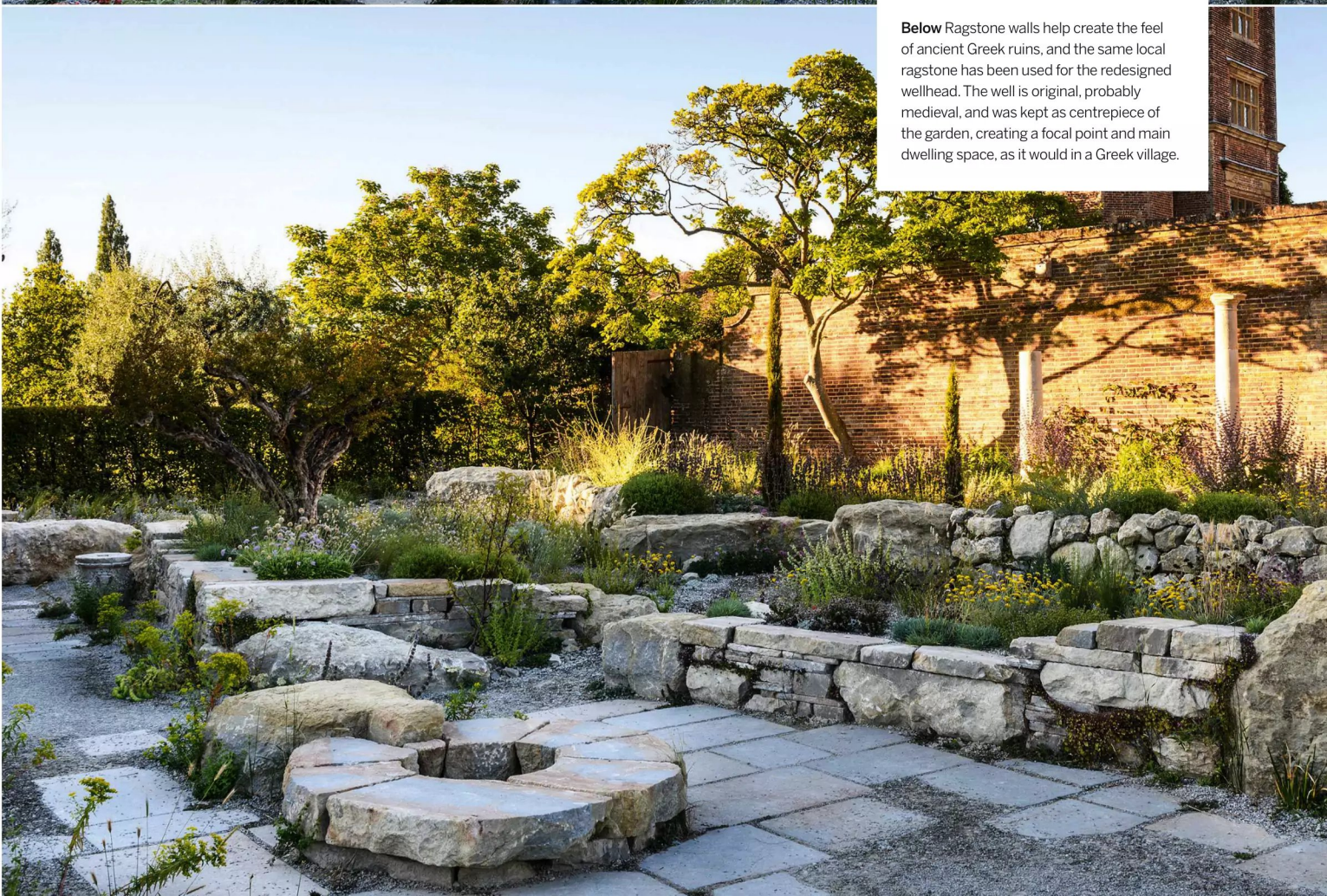
Above The thin pencil cypresses, *Cupressus sempervirens* Stricta Group, work alongside the stone columns to provide strong verticality from the naturalistic ground-level planting and help draw the tall poplar that is growing just outside the garden into the composition.



Below The stone columns, which came from High Wall, a Harold Peto-designed garden in Oxfordshire, have been reconstructed here, just as they have been on the island of Delos, to give a sense of original architecture, supported by ground-level planting that evokes the Greek *phrygana*.



Above The stepped, stone architecture echoes the walls seen in original photographs of the Delos garden. These ragstone walls become more rustic as you move away from the formality of the central axis and over time they will become colonised by self-seeders.



Below Ragstone walls help create the feel of ancient Greek ruins, and the same local ragstone has been used for the redesigned wellhead. The well is original, probably medieval, and was kept as centrepiece of the garden, creating a focal point and main dwelling space, as it would in a Greek village.

Constructing the past

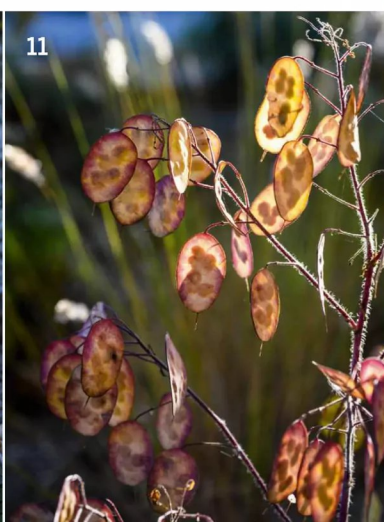
Walls within the garden were made from a locally sourced Kentish ragstone, their construction inspired by archival imagery and intended to capture the spirit of the island. Those leading to the central path are deliberately crafted to echo the ruins of Delos, while further away they break down to emulate the rubble terraces of Greek hillsides. Small paths, described as goat tracks, weave through the garden to provide intimate circulation and the intrigue of discovery; key boulders underpin the garden and feel like underlying bedrock.

Around half of the soil mix contains 5-10mm grit and crushed brick to aid drainage. A 10cm mulch of grit prevents self-seeding where open ground is needed to retain airiness, but thins near the goat tracks to allow seeding of ephemeral Greek annuals, such as poppies and adonis. To emulate the scrubby Greek *phrygana*, the mingled planting of shrubs and sub-shrubs is interplanted with bulbs including *Crocus sativus*, *Iris tuberosa* and *Anemone pavonina*. Shade-tolerant plants, such as *Cyclamen hederifolium*, *Iris lazica* and *Paeonia peregrina*, follow the shadow of trees and the tall walls, which provide year-round influence.





In the first year after planting the self-seeders are not yet in evidence, but short-lived perennials, such as *Salvia sclarea* var. *turkestaniana* 'Vatican Pink' and *Melica ciliata*, will over time be allowed to find their own niches and provide the garden with differing generations of planting.



12 KEY PLANTS

1 *Rhodanthemum catananche* 'Tizi-n-Test' A mound-forming perennial, also sold as *Catananche caerulea* 'Tizi-n-Test', that has cornflower-like flowers and papery seedheads. Hardy to -12°C, it needs sun and free drainage. 15cm. USDA 7a-10b†.

2 *Thymra capitata* A shrubby thyme that is tolerant of maritime exposure and is an excellent source of food for bees. Hardy to between -10°C and -12°C, it needs full sun and very good drainage. 40cm. USDA 6a-9b.

3 *Euphorbia rigida* Bright, acidic-yellow flowers in early spring and evergreen silver foliage. It has allelopathic properties that suppress weed germination. Hardy to -15°C, requires sun and free drainage. 40-50cm. AGM*. RHS H6, USDA 7a-10b.

4 *Melica ciliata* A short-lived, adaptable grass, happy to gently seed in sun or light shade. Hardy to -15°C. 60-80cm. RHS H6.

5 *Achillea coarctata* A low groundcover that offers a long flowering period, even in heat and drought. Hardy to -15°C, it requires sun and free drainage. 15-30cm.

6 *Cotinus coggygria* The smoke bush is a shrub that offers smoky panicles of flowers in summer and spectacular autumn colour, which becomes stronger when grown 'hard' in poor, free-draining soils. Hardy to -15°C. 3m. RHS H5, USDA 5a-8b.

7 *Tanacetum densum* subsp. *amani* Low, evergreen groundcover, silvery white foliage and pure-white flowers. Allelopathic, but happy to live among tree roots. Hardy to -15°C, it requires sun or light shade. 20cm.

8 *Ballota pseudodictamnus* Low, evergreen mounds of grey-green, felted foliage with allelopathic properties, which suppress competition. Hardy to between -12°C and -15°C, requires sun or light shade and free-draining soil. 30-40cm. AGM. RHS H4.

9 *Lomelosia cretica* Forming a dense, evergreen mound 80cm wide with scabious flowers. It is allelopathic, so suppresses competition, and is easily grown in full sun with free drainage. Good pollinator. Hardy to between -10°C and -12°C. 60cm.

10 *Sedum sediforme* Low, evergreen groundcover with erect flowering stems and soft yellow flowers to 30cm. Easy in rubbly conditions in poor soils. Hardy to -15°C.

11 *Lunaria annua* 'Corfu Blue' A short-lived perennial form of the usually biennial honesty, seeding easily in sun or shadow. Its beautiful violet-blue flowers, from April to June, are followed by attractive, purple-tinged seedheads. Hardy to -15°C. 60cm. AGM. RHS H6, USDA 5a-7b.

12 *Origanum laevigatum* An airy, deciduous perennial, that offers clouds of nectar-rich flowers, much loved by butterflies. Hardy to -15°C, it needs sun and free drainage. 60cm. AGM. RHS H6.

*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society. †Hardiness ratings given where available.



Delos must have felt very forward-
thinking in its echoing of a real
place and with its mood of
somewhere wild and foreign

Beneath a pomegranate tree a more open
clearing has been left for annuals to flourish,
and to allow bulbs, including *Sternbergia*
lutea and *Crocus sativus*, to naturalise.

HORTICULTURAL WHO'S WHO

HOWARD SOOLEY

The garden photographer on his addiction to plants, his love of punk, cinema and lichen, and how his friendship with the filmmaker Derek Jarman helped him to slow down

WORDS JODIE JONES PORTRAIT CHARLIE HOPKINSON

I am an observer of things," says Howard Sooley. "Someone gave me a rather hopeless little Instamatic camera when I was a kid and I fell in love with taking pictures. It's a genius thing – to share with other people what it is that you see."

Genius is a word that Howard uses a lot, speaking softly but fluently about the things that matter to him, including photography and film, but also punk music, the Alpine Garden Society and the many quietly exceptional people who have crossed his path and shaped his career.

Growing up in a mining community in Doncaster was genius, he says, because there was an amazing sense of community, although unlike the majority of his classmates he had no desire to become a coal miner himself. "I was an artistic kind of kid, always out building things in the woods, listening to Joy Division and reading *The Face*. I thought I was different and there were a handful of others like me so we found each other and hung out."

Then, when he was 16, his parents suddenly moved the family to Canada for a change of perspective. "Vancouver was the polar opposite of Doncaster and we had no work and no money." Howard knocked on the door of the best photographic studio in the city on the day their assistant walked out and landed his first job in the industry. Assisting five photographers was great experience, but his real education came from Jim the studio janitor, who taught

young Howard to come to work in a suit so he wouldn't get given the dirty jobs. Then, just as Howard was settling into this new life, his parents upped sticks again and brought the family back to England.

"I signed up for a degree in film and photography at Harrow College and I loved it. I used to go to triple bills of German expressionism at the Scala Cinema and make films of my mum ironing." He also developed a plant addiction, which started with a pot of regale lilies. "I was fascinated that for a pound you could buy this slow-burn firework that was guaranteed to blow your mind."

He joined the British Lichen Society and was happiest on his hands and knees in a rockery, but when his degree came to an end he decided to try his luck as a portrait photographer. "I shot all my friends. I did it in a week, but the light was good that week." He took his portfolio into *Vogue* and they sent him to Moscow to take pictures of Rupert Everett. "The 1980s were a different world. It was like a wonderful dream."

Soon he was jumping on planes, photographing actors and models and spending all the money he earned buying stuff to make the mad pace bearable. "Gradually I realised I was running on the spot." And then, in 1990, *The Face* sent him to photograph Derek Jarman.

"That day we walked on the beach at Dungeness, talking about plants and films. It was genius. And for the next five years I spent most of my time there, just doing a couple of jobs a month to pay the bills."

"Working with Derek was the first time I made a garden. There were no lawns or flowerbeds or expectations about what you should or shouldn't do. It was an open-hearted intervention in a place and people just wandered in and shared what we were doing."

Howard took endless photographs of the garden and of Derek (then entering the final stages of the illness that killed him), which came together in the landmark book *Derek Jarman's Garden*. Suddenly the world went mad for witching stones stacked on rusted metal spikes and drifts of *Crambe maritima* bursting from the pebble beach and Howard launched into a parallel career as a garden photographer.

He worked first with *Gardens Illustrated* and then with everyone from Dan Pearson and Monty Don to Valerie Finnis, Christopher Lloyd and Fergus Garrett. "I didn't really know what I was doing. No one told me that garden photographers start at 5am so I came to the work from a different place. The best advice I got

was from Miranda Brooks, the American *Vogue* gardens editor, who told me not to just photograph a garden but to think about the story I wanted to tell about it."

Sometimes he tells those stories with a large plate camera, sometimes with his iPhone. He is currently making a film at Great Dixter and a book on colour for a Danish fabric company. In a world full of beautiful garden photography Howard's work still stands out. Whatever their format, his images have an unflinching reality that gives them a mythic, timeless quality. "It is tempting to frame a nice shot, but what does it tell you? You have to see something of meaning and then share it. That's what makes photography genius." ■

USEFUL INFORMATION

Find out more about Howard's work at howardsooley.com and you can see more of his photography by following him on Instagram at @idleriver.

I DIDN'T REALLY
KNOW WHAT I
WAS DOING. NO
ONE TOLD ME
THAT GARDEN
PHOTOGRAPHERS
START AT 5AM



Clematis 'Sizaia Ptitsa'

An offspring of *C. x durandii*, with one of the largest flowers in the herbaceous group. The violet-blue sepals, which have a deep-violet stripe along the centre and are paler towards the edge, are narrow and twisted, giving it a spider-like appearance. Flowers from June to September. 1.5m. RHS H6†.

HERBACEOUS CLEMATIS

These non-climbing beauties are a boon to any border, clambering over their neighbours, spilling from raised beds and tumbling on to paths

WORDS TOM BROWN PHOTOGRAPHS DIANNA JAZWINSKI



***Clematis* 'Étoile Rose'**

A delightful, semi-nodding clematis. The flowers range in colour from deep pink to pale mauve, and have silvery-pink margins that curve slightly, with the centres a darker shade of pink. A more vigorous type that can be used to enhance a large shrub or cover a sizeable wall or fence. 2.5m. RHS H4.

T

rends, flowers and colours may divide our tastes in the gardening community but very few plants have the universal admiration and enduring popularity of the much-loved clematis. The plants have such wide-ranging appeal, originating from a broad and diverse group of nearly 300 species. The genus *Clematis* has been planted and cultivated in English gardens since the 16th century and belongs to the Ranunculaceae or the buttercup family, alongside border stalwarts such as delphiniums, anemones and thalictrums.

Every family has its divas and if we put the large-flowered – and, dare I say, temperamental – attention-seekers to one side for a moment, I would like to explore the easier-to-grow, generously flowering and endlessly rewarding herbaceous group.

Lacking tendrils to cling as they climb, these clematis need support, and will happily scramble through either a birch or a hazel-clad dome, or through a neighbouring shrub. The shrub *Physocarpus opulifolius* 'Diabolo', for example, is a useful, rich-purple foil for other plants, but now let's imagine it with the violet-blue flowers of *Clematis* 'Arabella', popping all over its foliage, and suddenly it has been elevated to another level of interest entirely.

One noteworthy species in this herbaceous group is *Clematis integrifolia*, from which has been bred an extensive number of cultivars and hybrids. It is used extensively in hybridising for some beautiful, award-winning plants such as *C. x durandii*, which is a cross between *C. integrifolia* and *C. 'Jackmanii'*. These plants make lovely additions to a herbaceous border, either by the way of a vertical accent, as groundcover or perhaps cascading over the edge of a raised bed. They're poster plants for the cottage style of gardening.

Another species of this group that I would like to draw your attention to is *C. heracleifolia*. Introduced into cultivation in 1837 and known as the hyacinth-flowered clematis (how could you not be intrigued?), *C. heracleifolia* and its various cultivars all have their own, unique allure, and provide a good burst of colour, as well as an attractive source of nectar for butterflies, towards the end of the summer when other plants are starting to dwindle. Some may argue that the percentage of leaf to flower, compared with their more extravagant cousins, could be criticised; I say embrace the more naturalistic balance, cut a few stems for your kitchen table and prepare to be converted. Renowned plantsman Christopher Lloyd echoed the joy created by the scent of these clematis, along with others in this group, when he wrote in his 1977 book *Clematis*: 'Vanilla, hot chocolate, almonds, lemons, primroses, cowslips and violets: all of these and other essences are wafted towards us on a light and teasing current of air so that we stop in delighted perplexity and seek out the cause with exploratory eyes, looking up and down and around about us.'

The advice of keeping the tops sunny and the base cool may be crude, but it is very apt for growing the majority of clematis. If fertile, moist and free-draining soil frustratingly eludes you, why not try growing clematis in a container? A good-sized, deep pot is ideal, filled with a mixture of peat-free compost and John Innes No.2, say 50:50, with a few handfuls of grit. Just add a 5cm layer of grit on the top and a fortnightly potash feed during the growing season and you'll have a winning formula. Clematis pruning can baffle and may deter some from growing these plants but the unadulterated joy that characterises this selection of clematis is that their treatment could not be simpler: as they flower on their current year's growth, they need to be cut down to just above the ground each spring as their buds begin to swell.

These gorgeous, herbaceous clematis offer us an easy win – simple to look after and care for, extending the season of our shrubs and borders, and flowering late on into the mist-filled autumn. All they ask of us is a few pea sticks or a shrub through which to scramble. I don't think that's a bad deal at all. □

• Tom Brown is head gardener at West Dean Gardens near Chichester in West Sussex. His recommendations for the best herbaceous clematis can be found over the next five pages.

PLANT PROFILE

What Herbaceous clematis, including non-twining, climbing species and hybrids bred from species such as *C. integrifolia*, *C. x diversifolia*, *C. viticella*, *C. heracleifolia*, *C. recta* and *C. viorna*. Sometimes known as solitary or entire-leaved clematis.

Origins Originating from Europe and Asia.

Season Long-lived plants with an extensive flowering period from midsummer to early autumn.

Size From 60cm-2.5m in height with a 50cm-1m spread, depending on the species.

Conditions Tolerant of most fertile garden soils that do not become waterlogged or dry out. Best grown in full sun or light shade with a cool root run. Will grow on a range of pH, but particularly suited to neutral or alkaline soils. Pruning group three (remove previous year's growth to a pair of strong buds).

Hardiness Hardy throughout all of UK and northern Europe with an hardiness rating of RHS H4 to H6. Depending on species they are suitable for gardens in USDA zones 3a-9b.

*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society.

†Hardiness ratings given where available.

***Clematis* 'Sweet
Scentsation'**

Masses of small, star-shaped, scented, white flowers during July and August. Can be used to great effect if planted with another vigorous cultivar from the herbaceous group. Its showy sepals offer both scent and colour. 2.5m. RHS H5, USDA 7a-8b.



Clematis heracleifolia
'Pink Dwarf'

Small, bell-shaped, pink flowers bloom from July with a sweet scent. This low, shrubby clematis works well in semi-shade and is suitable for the front of a border. Flowers can also be cut and enjoyed in your home. 70cm. RHS H6.



Clematis 'Alionushka'

A free-flowering clematis with deep-mauve to pink, bell-shaped flowers from early summer right through to the autumn. An excellent form for growing up a trellis or wall, but remember to help the plant out by tying it in as it grows. 1.5m. AGM*. RHS H6.



Clematis songorica

Pure-white flowers with cream-coloured panicles have a hawthorn or meadowsweet scent to them and are held on bamboo-like, grooved stems. Flowers are followed by fabulous seedheads in the autumn. 1.5m. RHS H6, USDA 6a-8b.



Clematis Mississippi River (= 'Zomisri')

With *C. integrifolia* running strongly through its genetics, rich, dark-violet flowers appear over a long period from early summer through to autumn. This excellent new hybrid originates from Wim Snoeijer of J van Zoest. 2m. RHS H6.



Clematis 'Arabella'

Rightly one of the most popular herbaceous clematis. Deep-blue to mauve flowers with a hint of pink in abundance from early summer until the autumn. Suitable for a deep pot for those without much space or who lack a suitable spot in the garden. 1.8m. AGM. RHS H6.



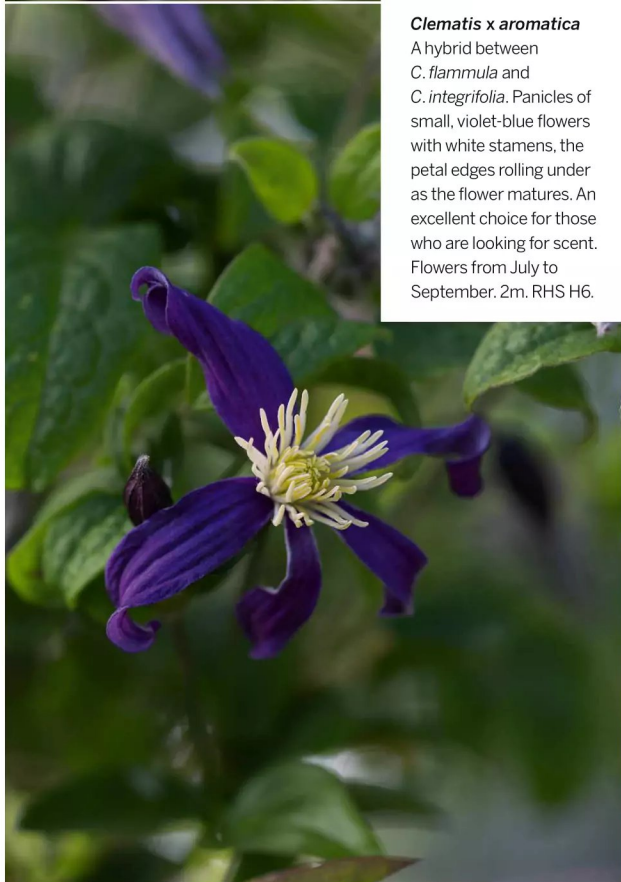
***Clematis* 'Everett'**

Named after Everett Leeds, a former chairman of the British Clematis Society, this clematis has *C. viorna* parentage. The reddish-purple, urn-shaped flowers become paler towards the tip of the recurved petals and are much paler on the inside. 1.5m. RHS H4.



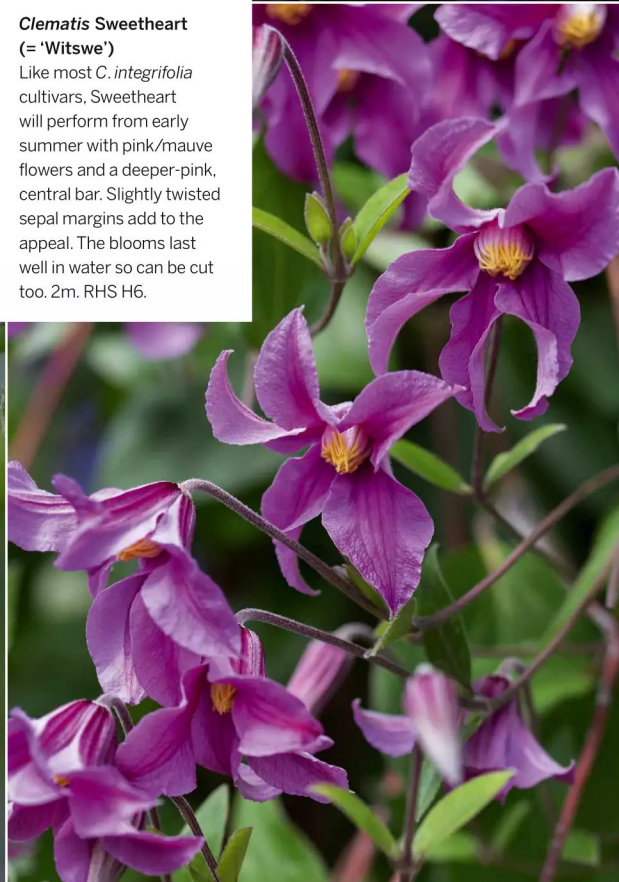
***Clematis heracleifolia*
var. *tubulosa* Alan Bloom
(= 'Alblo')**

A cultivar bred from this Manchurian and Korean variety of *C. heracleifolia*, which gives masses of hyacinth-like flowers with recurved sepals. The scented, dark-blue flowers appear from July. Loved by bees. 1.5m. RHS H6.



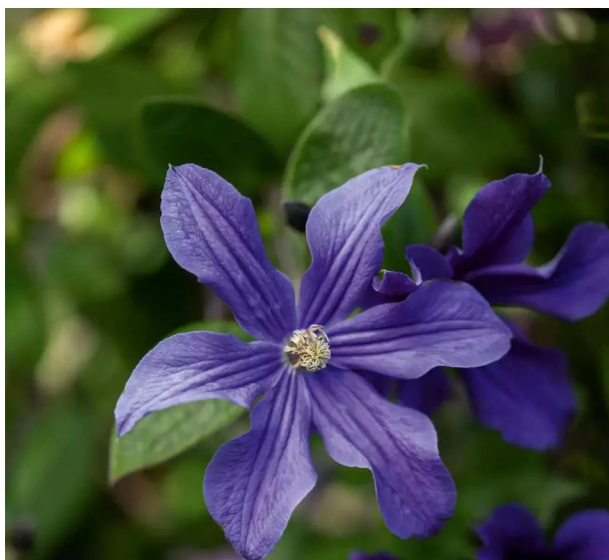
Clematis* x *aromatica

A hybrid between *C. flammula* and *C. integrifolia*. Panicles of small, violet-blue flowers with white stamens, the petal edges rolling under as the flower matures. An excellent choice for those who are looking for scent. Flowers from July to September. 2m. RHS H6.



***Clematis* Sweetheart
(= 'Witswe')**

Like most *C. integrifolia* cultivars, Sweetheart will perform from early summer with pink/mauve flowers and a deeper-pink, central bar. Slightly twisted sepal margins add to the appeal. The blooms last well in water so can be cut too. 2m. RHS H6.



Clematis x durandii

A much-loved hybrid between *C. 'Jackmanii'* and *C. integrifolia* with rich, saucer-shaped, indigo-blue flowers with deep midribs. The semi-nodding flowers, with beautifully contrasting pale-yellow anthers, appear from June until the autumn. 1.5m. AGM. RHS H6, USDA 5a-9b.



***Clematis Princess Kate* (= 'Zoprika')**

Ideal for cutting. The white sepals with contrasting, outer, purple hues and a dark-purple centre, are fit for a queen and are borne from June to September. Reflexed sepals of these trumpet, almost tulip-like, flowers grow on dark-purple stems. 3m. RHS H5.



Cultivation

If you are looking for an exact replica of your plant, division, cuttings or layering techniques are at your disposal, but a number of these species are easy to grow from seed. Clematis seed does not keep for long so it's best sown when ripe and comes away from the plant with ease. Sow thinly on top of a pot full of compost (2-3cm off the rim) and cover lightly with more compost before topping with a layer of grit to hold the moisture in and protect the seed. Place in a cool spot and do not allow the seeds to dry out. Do not be too quick to throw the pot away if germination isn't swift, as they can be erratic. And remember that patience is a virtue.

Clematis wilt strikes fear into the hearts of most gardeners, but rest assured that the herbaceous group, with their refined and sophisticated flowers, are rarely affected. Aphids can be problematic when growth begins in spring, but if you're on the ball these can easily be dealt with through physical removal or a garlic- or soap-based spray.

Rabbits find young clematis shoots very appetising, so if they are a problem for you, protect the young shoots with some chicken wire and then remove it when the growth matures and the allure subsides as the stems harden.

Slugs and snails can also be tempted by the young leaves, and damage by these hungry pests will delay flowering and weaken the plant. A very knowledgeable chap once told me to control slugs and snails in February to prevent subsequent populations booming. Half an eaten grapefruit, turned upside down, or a beer trap from late winter onwards should keep them at bay without the need for pellets.

Recommended reading

• ***Clematis: The Genus* by Christopher Grey-Wilson (Timber Press, 2000)**

A comprehensive, botanical guide to this incredibly popular group of plants. With clematis being such a diverse group, Grey-Wilson breaks down each species to discuss classifications, origins, hybrids and garden performance for the more scientifically minded gardeners among us.

• ***Clematis* by Christopher Lloyd (HarperCollins, 1977)**

As ever, Lloyd entertains and informs us with his deeply rooted knowledge about these climbing and non-climbing favourites. From a gardener's perspective, he covers all aspects of their cultivation, including pruning, propagation and the vast choice that faces, and sometimes daunts, us as gardeners and collectors.

Where to buy and see

• **Kevock Garden Plants**

Kevock Road, Lasswade, Midlothian EH18 1HX.
Tel 0131 454 0660,
kevockgarden.co.uk

• **Hawthornes Nursery***

Marsh Road, Hesketh Bank, nr Preston, Lancashire PR4 6XT.
Tel 01772 812379,
hawthornes-nursery.co.uk

• **Peter Beales Roses**

London Road, Attleborough, Norwich, Norfolk NR17 1AY.
Tel 01953 454707,
classicroses.co.uk

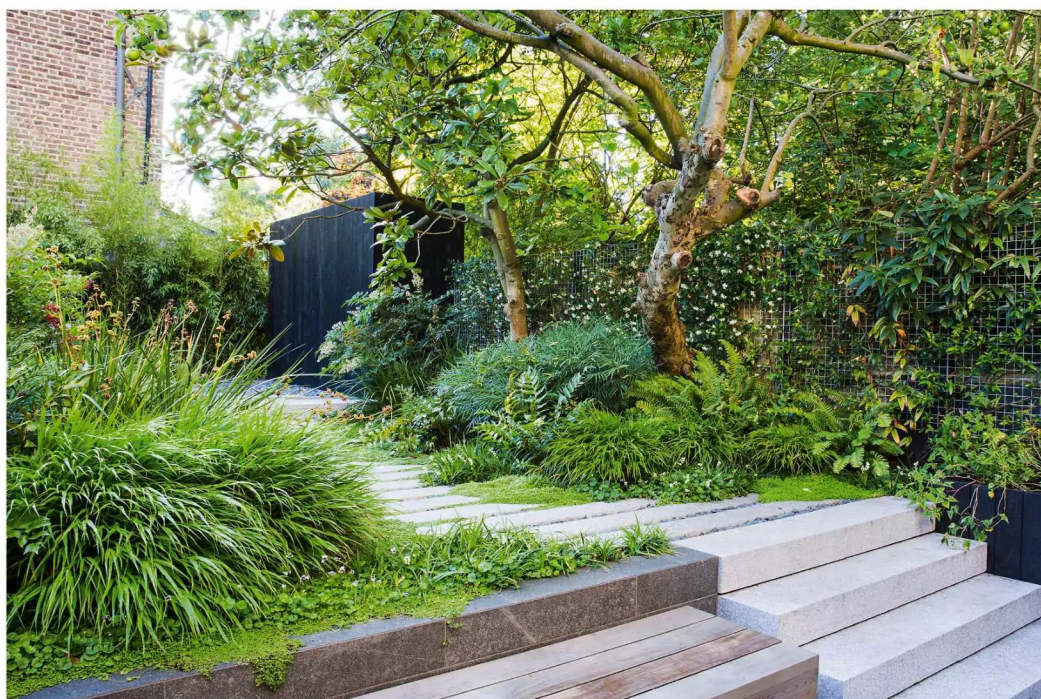
• **Thorncroft Clematis**

Merryfield, North Green, Reymerston, Norwich, Norfolk NR9 4RD.
Tel 01953 850407,
thorncroftclematis.co.uk
Mailorder only

• **Walled Garden Nursery**

Brinkworth House, Brinkworth, nr Malmesbury, Wiltshire SN15 5DF.
Tel 07921 436863,
clematis-nursery.co.uk

*National Collection holder



Above The existing apple and *Magnolia grandiflora* trees, emerging from layered planting of *Mahonia eurybracteata* subsp. *ganpinensis* 'Soft Caress' and *Hakonechloa macroa*, have been pruned to enhance their sculptural shapes.

Left (from left) *Hakonechloa macroa* grows lushly in this garden; the bell-like flowers of *Ophiopogon planiscapus*, which develops shiny, purplish-blue berries; glossy-leaved Japanese holly fern *Cyrtomium falcatum*, with spores on the undersides of the leaves.

Below *Libertia chilensis*, which holds handsome seedheads from midsummer, *Mahonia eurybracteata* subsp. *ganpinensis* 'Soft Caress' and *Cyrtomium falcatum* create a mix of textures and shapes.





IN BRIEF

What City garden on three levels.

Where London.

Size 13.5m x 6.6m.

Soil Silty loam.

Climate Mild, wet winters and dry springs and summers.

Hardiness zone USDA 8.

A step up

Designer James Aldridge has transformed a dilapidated south London garden using layers of planting and hard landscaping to soothing effect

WORDS ANNIE GATTI PHOTOGRAPHS RACHEL WARNE

It was trips to Japan by both garden designer James Aldridge and the owners of this shady south London garden that inspired its calm, green, elegant look. “We used elements of Japanese design but the intention was never to make a Japanese garden,” explains James. “It was more to evoke the passion and love we both felt for Japan.”

It is a garden of layers, starting with a terrace of dark-grey basalt slabs that flows seamlessly from the dining area of the kitchen to a retaining wall fitted with a cantilevered timber bench. Silver granite steps lead up to the next level, where mainly evergreen planting creates a series of mounding shapes on

either side of a gently meandering path, framed by the branches of two existing trees – in the foreground a mature apple and behind it a *Magnolia grandiflora* – that have been pruned to highlight their sculptural qualities. At the back, a further step leads to another terrace where the late-afternoon sun warms a seating area arranged around a polished-concrete fire pit. Here the clients are screened by waving stems of *Phillostachys nigra* bamboo on the back wall and a tapestry of scented climbers fixed to 1.8m-high wire mesh screens on the north side.

The boundaries of the original garden, which faces east and is heavily shaded by neighbouring trees to the south, were a mix of ramshackle fence and walls at ▷

Above The layered planting in the large bed, culminating in the summer-flowering stems of *Nandina domestica*, obscures the seating area from view. A path, softened by mats of *Ophiopogon planiscapus*, *Soleirolia soleiroliae* and *Viola hederacea*, slows down the journey to the end of the garden.



Planting is restrained,
with repetitions of the
same shade-tolerant
plants, originating mainly
from Japan and the Far
East, filling the beds

Above The garden is unified both by repeat evergreen planting and the hard landscaping, which incorporates a calming blend of dark-grey and pale elements combined in the main path made of silver granite planks and smooth, grey pebbles, and the rear terrace where the fire pit is finished in polished concrete.

▷ different heights. James unified the whole space by covering the boundaries in scented evergreens and a panel of black timber, created the Japanese way by burning and treating with a beautiful crackle finish. This distinctive timber is also used for a bespoke shed at the back of the garden, and for cupboard doors of the barbecue unit close to the house.

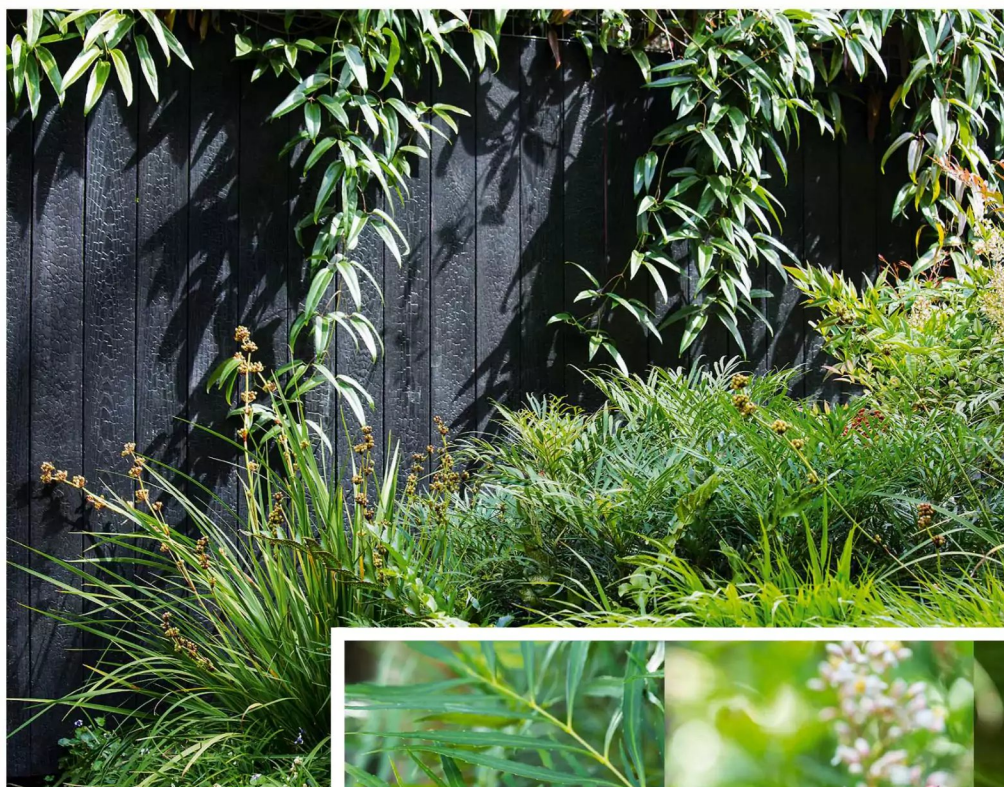
The hard landscaping, a mix of dark grey and pale elements, is kept deliberately calm. The distinctive path, which consists of silver granite planks separated by channels of grey pebbles, is James's response to budgetary limits and to the fact the trunk of the apple tree juts out at an angle. "I was looking at what was available off the shelf, in terms of unit size. These planks informed the pathway – I didn't want a hard path through the planting."

The planting too is restrained, with repetitions of the same shade-tolerant plants filling the beds. James has chosen the plants, most of which originate from Japan and other parts of the Far East, for their form and foliage, and predominantly used evergreens to create attractive views on to the garden all year round through a large picture window in the owners' kitchen. The groundcover is made up of just three

plants – the green form of lily turf (*Ophiopogon planiscapus*), mind-your-own-business (*Soleirolia soleiroliae*) and the Australian violet (*Viola hederacea*). The next layer is formed by ferns, such as *Cyrtomium falcatum* and *Polystichum munitum*, fine-leaved *Mahonia eurybracteata* subsp. *ganpinensis* 'Soft Caress', the mounding grass *Hakonechloa macra*, and tufts of *Libertia chilensis*. Sprays of *Nandina domestica* stems emerge as a canopy, offering flowers and berries in summer and burnished foliage in autumn. Pinpricks of white flowers are threaded through the garden in summer, with an eye-catching change in foliage tones in autumn from *Hakonechloa macra*, as it turns from russet to the colour of straw. The layering, James explains, will be more evident once the *Nandina* plants grow taller and have fully developed root systems. "We can then treat them like they do in Japan and clear the stems so that the foliage makes fine umbrellas. I think it's just a question of time and maintenance." ■

USEFUL INFORMATION

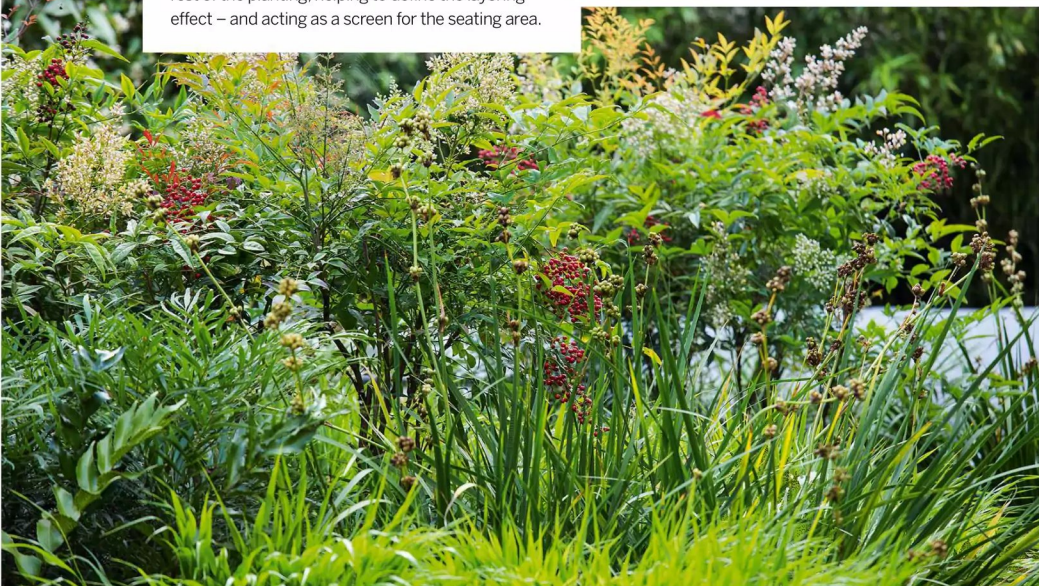
Find out more about James's work at jamesaldridgedesign.com

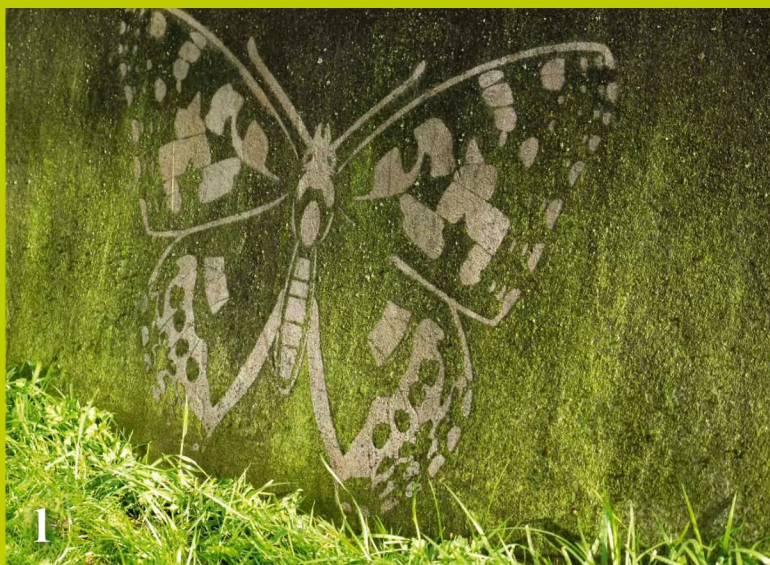


Above The burnt-timber fence is softened with swags of evergreen *Clematis armandii*, which has been 'borrowed' from the next-door garden and trained on galvanised wire mesh attached to the top of the fence.

Right (from left) The pencil-thin evergreen leaves of *Mahonia eurybracteata* subsp. *ganpinesis* 'Soft Caress'; the red berries of *Nandina domestica*, which in this sheltered city garden start to appear in midsummer alongside the white flowers; *Viola hederacea*, which has kidney-shaped leaves.

Below The Japanese technique of clear-stemming *Nandina domestica*, which can grow to around 1.7m, will eventually create umbrella shapes above the rest of the planting, helping to define the layering effect – and acting as a screen for the seating area.





1 Reverse graffiti, in which images are created by removing dirt, or in this case moss, from a surface, is a clean and green way of mixing art and horticulture.

2 Steve Wheen, the Pothole Gardener, describes his tiny gardens as little 'holes of happiness' but his Instagram feed serves as a reminder of the lack of green space around roads. **3** In 1973, **Liz Christy** successfully petitioned the City of New York to grant her community garden group, the Green Guerrillas, access to a vacant plot of land for \$1 a month. It's still a popular haven for New Yorkers, and the Green Guerrillas continue to support garden projects across the city's five boroughs. **4** The UK's champion of guerrilla gardening, **Richard Reynolds**, began greening the streets around his London home in 2004, and is the author of *On Guerrilla Gardening: A Handbook for Gardening without Boundaries*. **5 Planting around street trees**, as in this mix of *Phalaris arundinacea* var. *picta*, *Lobularia maritima* and *Coreopsis tinctoria* 'Mahogany Midget', is an increasingly common way for communities to improve their environment.



THE EVOLUTION OF A GREEN REVOLUTION

From its radical-activist roots in the 1970s, community gardening is now firmly mainstream, but with artists and craftspeople increasingly involved, these collaborative projects now take on many and various guises

WORDS TIM RICHARDSON

Most of us are familiar with the concept of a community garden. But what is 'community gardening'? Attempting a definition reveals the huge range, scope and potential of these activities. It's something I've come to appreciate, having founded and launched the Chelsea Fringe Festival ten years ago. The aim there was to celebrate the many ways we can intersect with plants and gardens, based on the conviction that gardening is never only about horticulture. The fact this unfunded, volunteer-run festival has to date seen more than 2,500 quirky and original events in more than 20 countries is perhaps an indication of the strength and depth of interest in gardening in all its many guises.

The first permanent community garden was created in New York in 1973 by a group called the Green Guerillas, their name an early indication of the intrinsically radical nature of this kind of activity. That example has spawned thousands of community gardens, mainly in the USA and northern Europe. Today, guerilla gardening is often defined as 'illicit gardening on land you do not own'. It can take the form of informal local actions, such as planting up the tree pits around the bases of street trees, or on roundabouts. Or it can be organised as a form of political and environmental action, as with the activities of the Edible Bus Stop collective in south London, or via activists such as Richard Reynolds.

Associated with guerilla gardening is the concept of environmental propaganda. Many of the most active guerilla gardeners use their actions to make

a wider point about the nature and upkeep – or non-upkeep – of public spaces. This can morph into quirky social-media campaigns such as that of the Pothole Gardener (Steve Wheen), who made tiny gardens in potholes and then photographed them to highlight the lack of green spaces around roads.

Linked to guerilla gardening, but not quite the same thing, is organised on-street gardening, where groups of locals band together to create and maintain plantings in places the local council may have neglected, or on pieces of land associated with public housing. Take the Walthamstow Street Gardeners in northeast London, where the 'guerilla' sights include a shrub-rose garden by the roadside.

Also related to guerilla activity is the concept of gardening in 'meanwhile' spaces – typically, privately owned land that may have been earmarked for housing or another use, but is not yet being developed. The difference is that permission is (usually) granted beforehand. A good example is the Omved project in Highgate, north London, a former nursery where the greenhouses regularly transform into a chic minimalist performance and gallery space.

Community gardening projects facilitated by companies or big organisations, such as the National Trust or the RHS, offer more potential avenues, although it can be difficult to create projects with a truly personal feel if they are overseen in this way. Professional landscape architects and gardeners can lead on community gardening – witness the success of John Little's 'Poppy Estate' in east London, where under his guidance the residents effectively took on the creation and upkeep of garden spaces on ►

Linked to guerilla gardening, is organised on-street gardening, where groups of locals band together to create and maintain plantings in places the local council may have neglected

There remains a natural radical edge to community gardening, which tends to attract independently minded people who have a strong sense of connection to the local area

▷ a former council estate. Small local charities and not-for-profit organisations have been formed to create and foster public gardens. Garden charities, such as Thrive in Battersea Park, work with people with disabilities or those who are experiencing homelessness, addiction, bereavement and other problems, while the highly effective Bankside Open Spaces Trust works with a variety of user groups, including the St Mungo's homelessness project.

Community gardening initiatives around food and drink, and the growing of 'edibles', can be highly successful in a community-gardening context. Witness the Blackstock Triangle Gardeners project, a successful front-garden food-sharing scheme in north London, while the charity Abundance encourages groups across the UK to harvest the annual glut of apples and other fruits that would otherwise go to waste. Foraging walks and botanical cocktail-making are just a few of the other ideas that have proved attractive in this area. The spectacular success of Incredible Edible Todmorden in West Yorkshire has shown that an entire town can be captivated by the concept of public garden plots made by locals.

Tree-planting initiatives – or rather, announcements of them – are beloved of politicians, attracted to big numbers as a demonstration of ecological commitment, but there are some more meaningful projects out there, such as the Brixton Orchard created by the Urban Growth collective right next to a busy, multi-lane London road.

Florists have also become much more active in community gardening, with several companies now focusing exclusively on British wildflowers. In Widnes in Cheshire, the Wonky Garden is a garden project that is successfully growing and selling cut flowers to fund its community projects. Throughout the Covid lockdown it delivered flowers to those in need of a pick-me-up at the local hospice and in care homes.

The use of plants in medicine and healing is another growth area that can form the basis of community-garden practice. The knowledge of herbalists, on how to grow, harvest and prepare plants for remedies, can be deployed in a community garden setting. In the mainstream, several GP practices now have gardens tended by patients who have been prescribed gardening as part of their longer-term treatment. The British Medical Association has hosted several day conferences on the topic in recent

years, as part of the Chelsea Fringe. And of course gardens themselves can be conceived as healing spaces: an open-air setting for activities such as yoga, tai chi, silent walks and forest bathing.

Scientific groups and institutions, such as the South London Botanical Institute, where the back garden functions essentially as a community space, are another way forward for community gardeners seeking to make an impact. Another scientific aspect of the community-garden world is the ecology garden, managed primarily for the benefit of birds and pollinating insects. Linked to this is the teaching of a range of rural-based activities including beekeeping, hedge laying and dry-stone walling – skills that can be honed in town as well as country.

Museums – especially smaller ones, such as the Horniman in south London – can provide excellent opportunities and space for community gardening, as well as garden spaces for the community to enjoy. The Hepworth Wakefield Garden, designed garden by Tom Stuart-Smith, is one such example. The arts are an exceptionally rich wellspring of community-garden activity. From on-street garden installations made by gardener-artists such as Tony Heywood, with his 'stained-glass greenhouse', to artistic actions such as performance- and sound-art or reverse graffiti – where dirty walls are jet-washed using a stencil to create images – there is no limit to artistic interaction with public open spaces. Music performances, poetry, film shows and even stand-up comedy have all found their niches in the community-garden world. Craft, too, has proven a natural bedfellow to community gardening, with 'guerilla knitters' working with garden groups to stake a claim over public space, while activities such as paper-making, dye production and textile work have a clear kinship with gardening. Quite often there is an environmental-political edge to such activities – for example, the creation of temporary gardens in car-parking spaces. A number of artistic groups, such as Phytology in east London and Kultivator in Sweden, have made this kind of work their mission.

There remains a natural radical edge to community gardening, which tends to attract independently minded people who have a strong sense of connection to the local area. And if we are talking definitions, perhaps it's worth remembering that 'radical' can also mean: 'grown from the roots'. ■



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6 Incredible Edible began as group of friends growing fruit and vegetables in private and public spaces across the Yorkshire town of Todmorden. It has now spread to towns and cities around the world.

7 Caroline Bousfield started 'guerrilla gardening' a **roundabout near London's Victoria Park** in 2002.

Almost 20 years on it has become an established garden that brings together many in this east London community. **8** Sue Hulme (right) and Deb Fath pick flowers at the **Wonky Garden**, Cheshire. Sue set up the community project in 2017 with friends Angela Hayler and Amanda Prescott, who all met during cancer treatment.

9 Now in its tenth year, the **Chelsea Fringe Festival** celebrates the many ways in which horticulture intersects with science, art and occasionally even a portable beer garden. **10** Entitled *Sacré blur*, this **greenhouse installation** is the work of artist and one-time head gardener, Tony Heywood and his partner Alison Condie. The duo used more than 2,000 pieces of salvaged 18th- and 19th-century stained glass to create this fabulous fantasy world.



The sheltered Gravel Garden where owners Nick and Louise Killen can sit among mounds of *Nepeta* 'Six Hills Giant' and the floating heads of *Cenolophium denudatum* and enjoy a view to the church where they married. The stone Farrowing House is now Nick's office.

A CLEAN SLATE

Garden designer Alison Jenkins has created a welcoming and cleverly planned family garden from an exposed site in the Mendip Hills

WORDS NON MORRIS PHOTOGRAPHS EVA NEMETH



IN BRIEF

What Private family garden.

Where Somerset.

Size Half an acre.

Soil Heavy clay.

Climate Temperate climate, typical of southwest England, generally wetter and milder than the rest of England. Exposed to the wind.

Hardiness zone USDA 9.

Top *Rosa* 'Princess Louise', a summer-flowering rambling rose with large clusters of small, blush-pink flowers that fade to white. Its elegant, pliable growth makes it easy to train. It is used here against the Farrowing House, an old stone building that is now used as an office space.

Above *Cenolophium denudatum* (Baltic parsley) has lacy, flat-topped umbels of creamy-white flowers, which rise from mounds of fine, fern-like foliage in midsummer and last well into autumn. An airy addition to a border and attractive to beneficial insects.

Left *Salvia nemorosa* 'Caradonna' is a clump-forming salvia bearing upright spikes of rich, violet-blue flowers from June to October. Alison pairs the salvia with the graceful, white spires of *Veronicastrum virginicum* 'Diane' to add energy to the planting scheme.



Top *Centranthus ruber* 'Albus' produces foaming heads of small, white flowers that add a softness to the planting. *Centranthus* self-seeds and is great for helping a new scheme look relaxed. Unwanted seedlings are easily removed.

Above *Erigeron karvinskianus* offers masses of tiny pink and white daisies that appear in May and continue until November. It is a perfect low-growing plant that will spill over on to a path to soften edges, and is another useful self-seeder.

Right *Thymus* Coccineus Group is an excellent groundcover thyme that tumbles on to the gravel, creating pools of colour. It forms a mat of glossy, blue-green leaves, which in summer are covered with deep-pink flowers that are very attractive to bees.

Sitting in the Gravel Garden
is too amazing to imagine.
Everything pops up, one thing
after another, it's like a cascade



There was nothing here except for the new house we had built on the footprint of an old milking parlour and some lovely stone outbuildings. The entire site was concrete: there were no hedges, not even a tree.” Louise Killen is setting the scene for the elegant, cleverly planned family garden that wraps so comfortably around the house today. “It felt so new. There was no context in which to bed itself in, just open farmland,” adds garden designer Alison Jenkins. “It badly needed structure and a sense of hunkering down.”

The brief was to create simple, natural-looking spaces that would look good throughout the year and act as a relaxed extension of the airy, uncluttered house. “The site felt potentially complicated,” explains Alison, “because the house is in the middle of the plot with no clear sense of back or front.” In the end, the fluid 360-degree connection between the interior and the exterior and the ease with which each part of the garden flows so comfortably through to the next is the scheme’s great triumph. Connections needed to be established between the main house and the boxy Farrowing House, which is now clad in the ▷

Above The path leading to the Gravel Garden, with the Farrowing House on the right and a wall made from recycled stone on the left. A corrugated iron silage barn provides protection from the wind. One of four field maples planted for shelter frames the view beyond.

The ease with which each part of
the garden flows so comfortably
through to the next is the
scheme's great triumph



Above The Willow Garden, a simple but effective grid of rumpled yew domes set in long grass with an inviting bench that catches the evening sun. Beyond the paling fence is the Vegetable Garden.

▷ delicate, blush rose 'Princess Louise' and used as an office by Louise's husband, Nick. The design also needed to link the wonderful, long, low Calf House, which became one side of the Vegetable Garden, and the open-sided Store, which frames an area known as The Meadows. This deliberately simple space, with mown paths through long grass and stands of the rosy-fruited crab apple *Malus* 'Evereste', has become the favourite place to play for the couple's two young sons.

The exquisitely planted Gravel Garden feels particularly welcoming and sheltered. Alison cleverly concentrated the intensive planting here so that the maintenance of the garden as a whole would never overwhelm. Louise's parents-in-law recycled stone from the site and hand-built the wall that runs along one side of this garden and Alison added a yew hedge for further protection. Generous quantities of evergreen mounding shrubs – *Phillyrea angustifolia*, *Santolina pinnata* subsp. *neapolitana* 'Edward Bowles' and *Teucrium x lucidrys* – underpin a cool palette of blues and whites and contrast with the airy *Stipa lessingiana* – a particularly tactile and long-lasting feather grass – ▷



3 WAYS TO USE HAZEL

Top Louise has enjoyed learning how to grow vegetables from her father-in-law, whose criss-cross 'nest' of hazel poles is a highly effective way of supporting peas.

Above Hazel hurdles are a sympathetic way of enclosing and protecting the Vegetable Garden in the gap between the Farrowing House and the long, low Calf House.

Left A plump teepee made by Louise from hazel pea sticks, collected from nearby woodland, supports sweet peas. Behind the teepee, figs are trained against the south-facing wall of the Farrowing House.



Top Salad crops, including these butterhead lettuces, are a popular addition to the Veg Garden.

Above Beetroot is an easy crop to grow and can be succession sown throughout the summer.

Right One of a pair of fig trees – *Ficus carica* 'Brown Turkey', known for its prolific fruiting and ability to tolerate the cold – grown against the south-facing wall of the Farrowing House.

Louise asked her father-in-law
to teach her how to grow
vegetables. It has been the
beginning of a new passion

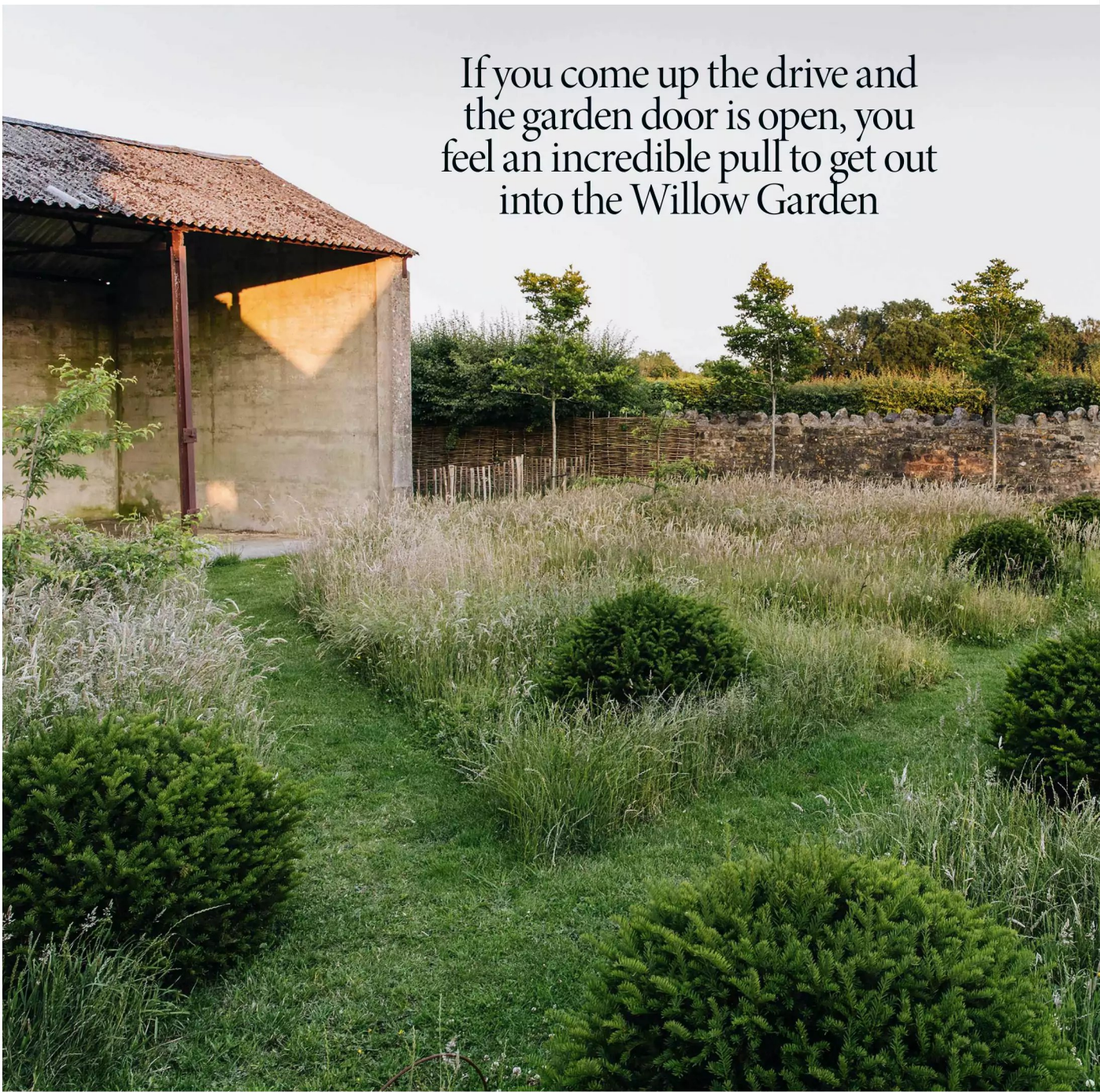


▷ and the honey-yellow *Miscanthus sinensis* 'Yaku-jima' – "a really good one because it's quite short; the space isn't huge so it was important that all the elements were in proportion."

Alison selected robust plants to cope with the clay soil, including *Veronicastrum virginicum* 'Diane' for its "elegant spires and because it is so reliably long-lived", and the dependable *Salvia nemorosa* 'Caradonna'. "The uprights set up the horizontal heads of the umbellifer *Cenolophium denudatum*, which lasts so well and has great seedheads." Louise still marvels at the effect: "Sitting in the Gravel Garden surrounded by planting is too amazing to imagine. Everything just pops up, one thing after another, it's like a cascade."

Alison fondly remembers the whole family – including Nick's parents – joining in with the planting, and once the Vegetable Garden had been laid out, Louise asked her father-in-law to teach her how to grow vegetables. It has been the beginning of a new passion. Louise has loved collecting hazel and learning how to make plump teepees for sweet peas and criss-cross 'baskets' for peas – "it's a great design because they can't fall over" – and has begun studying for an RHS certificate. ▷

Above The long, low Calf House, used for storing tools, and the Farrowing House, now a home office, frame the Vegetable Garden. Alison recommended keeping the vegetable beds simple and adaptable, with no additional edging, so that the family could experiment with what they would really like to grow and eat.



If you come up the drive and
the garden door is open, you
feel an incredible pull to get out
into the Willow Garden

Above The open-sided Store – an old tractor shed – looks out over the Willow Garden with its topiary yew domes and tantalising grid of long grass. On the other side of the Store is the more relaxed open space known as The Meadows.

▷ Beyond the Vegetable Garden is the Willow Garden (named for the family dog), a beautiful, hazy grid of slightly shaggy yew domes set in long grass with an enticing bench that catches the evening sun. For Louise, this is perhaps the cleverest aspect of the design. “It is so simple but so beautiful. It looks as lovely in winter as it does in summer.” There is a view through to it from the front door and another tantalising glimpse through the garden door that leads from the Gravel Garden to the Willow Garden. “If you come up the drive and the garden door is open, you feel an incredible pull to get out there.”

Subtle additions – ox-eye daisies in the Willow Garden, camassias in The Meadows – are planned for this imaginative and much-loved garden, which looks so happily settled after only five years. It will surely get better and better. ■

USEFUL INFORMATION

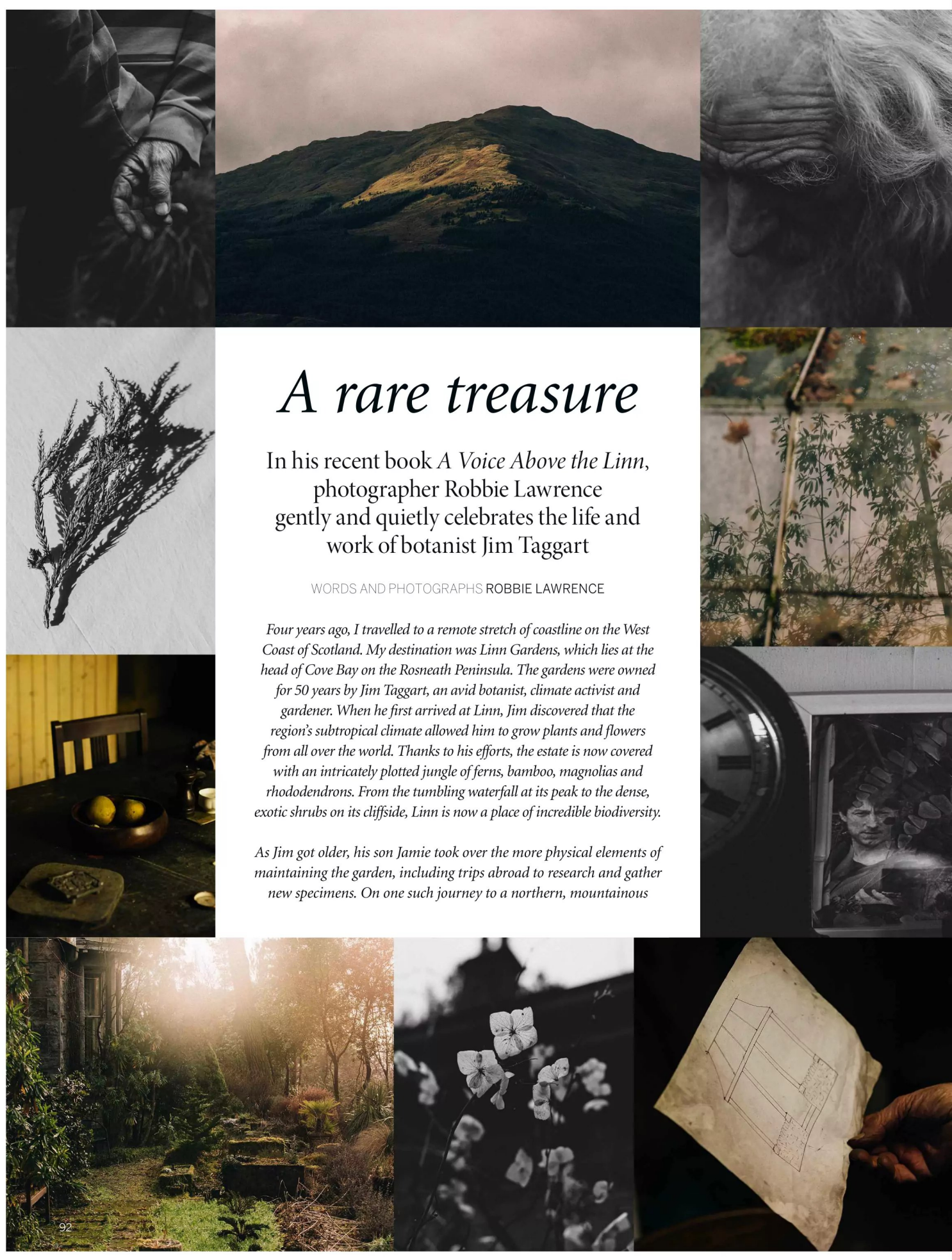
Find out more about Alison’s work at alisonjenkins.co.uk



Top *Rosa moschata* (musk rose), is a medium-sized rambling rose with lustrous sprays of creamy-white, single flowers that flower late and then repeat, and a strong, delicious musk fragrance.

Above *Holcus lanatus* (Yorkshire fog) grows among the indigenous tall grasses in the Willow Garden – it is a good grass for wildlife, particularly butterflies.

Left *Rosa Snow Goose* (= 'Auspom') is a repeat-flowering, English rambling rose bred by David Austin with dainty sprays of small, white flowers and a light musk scent.



A rare treasure

In his recent book *A Voice Above the Linn*, photographer Robbie Lawrence gently and quietly celebrates the life and work of botanist Jim Taggart

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHS ROBBIE LAWRENCE

Four years ago, I travelled to a remote stretch of coastline on the West Coast of Scotland. My destination was Linn Gardens, which lies at the head of Cove Bay on the Rosneath Peninsula. The gardens were owned for 50 years by Jim Taggart, an avid botanist, climate activist and gardener. When he first arrived at Linn, Jim discovered that the region's subtropical climate allowed him to grow plants and flowers from all over the world. Thanks to his efforts, the estate is now covered with an intricately plotted jungle of ferns, bamboo, magnolias and rhododendrons. From the tumbling waterfall at its peak to the dense, exotic shrubs on its cliffside, Linn is now a place of incredible biodiversity.

As Jim got older, his son Jamie took over the more physical elements of maintaining the garden, including trips abroad to research and gather new specimens. On one such journey to a northern, mountainous



region in Vietnam, Jamie disappeared. His body was found years later. He had fallen in one of the mountain's higher passes.

When I first met Jim, he was already getting on in years. He told me that he had decided to keep the garden going in memory of his son. The house and garden are littered with small tributes to Jamie; a delicate portrait above the fireplace, overgrown greenhouse experiments, a small pile of rocks next to the waterfall. Over the past few years I went back to visit Jim and document the garden as it changed with the seasons. Despite his age, Jim would bound around his domain, occasionally stopping to recount a lengthy anecdote about a particular fern or tree. Last summer [2019], Jim passed away at the age of 84.



The last few months have given me time to go through the photographs that I made while visiting Jim and collate them into an edit for this book. The result is a celebration of his life and of the thousands of plants that he nurtured for so many years.

Further details *A Voice Above the Linn* is published by Stanley Barker. Artists Editions are available to include a copy of the book along with one of four signed photographic print. The book also includes specially commissioned poems by John Burnside, written in response to the images, £275, stanleybarker.co.uk

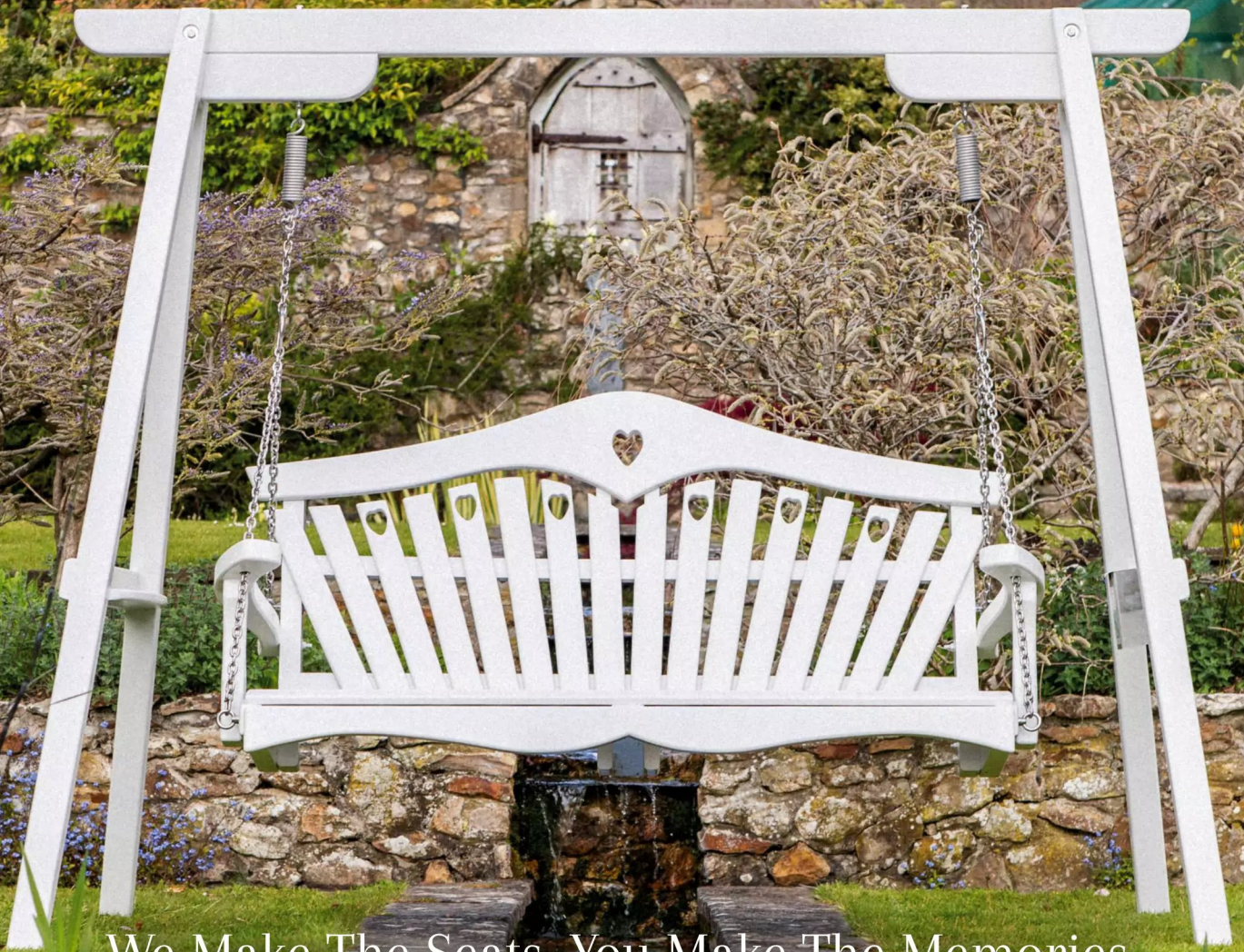
Linn Gardens have now been sold and their future guise is awaited with anticipation among the many enthusiasts who hope that their unique horticultural diversity will be preserved and cared for.





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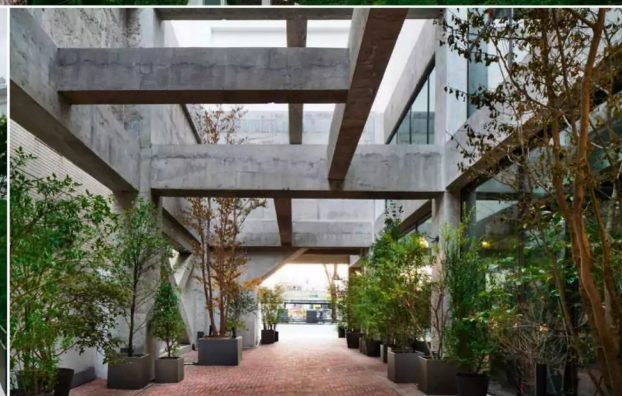
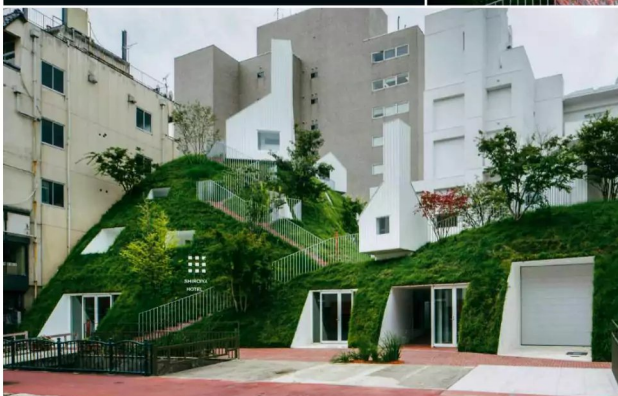
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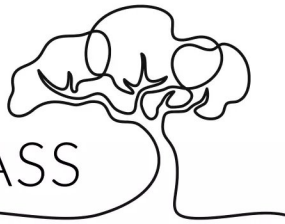


TOWERING SUCCESS

A four-storey hotel on the site of an historic inn in central Japan has been renovated by Tokyo-based Sou Fujimoto Architects. The interior of the inn, in central Maebashi, was dismantled to create a large, plant-filled atrium. An open passageway, lined with potted shrubs and trees, leads to the Green Tower, a grass-covered extension at the back of the hotel, where a zig-zag external brick staircase provides access to a series of cabins, one of which contains a sauna. Guest rooms inside this hill-shaped annexe have balconies cut into the slope, creating a sense of being surrounded by greenery. sou-fujimoto.net



GARDEN MASTERCLASS



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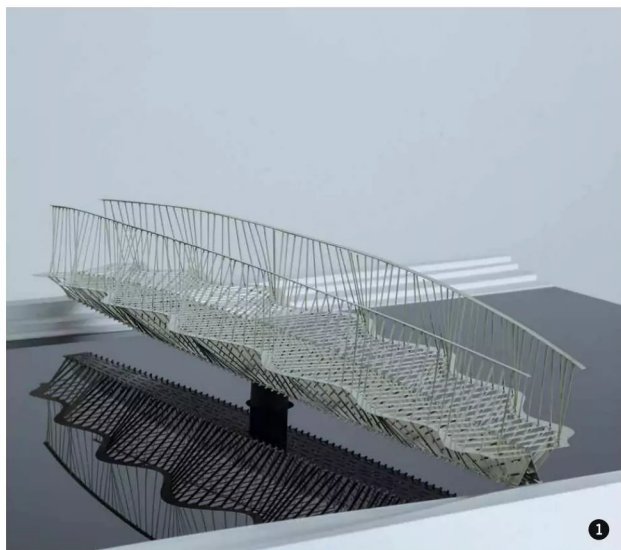


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News

COMPILED BY ANNIE GATTI



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2



3



4

① SWING BRIDGE

The undulating form of a bony fish was the inspiration for a new swing bridge in south London. Designed by architects Tonkin Liu, in collaboration with structural engineers Arup, the 8m-long, lightweight bridge provides access to Dinosaur Island in Crystal Palace Park, which is home to a collection of historic, life-sized, concrete dinosaurs. The pivoting bridge can be swung to connect to the banks when needed for staff to maintain the dinosaurs or during educational trips. When not in use, it becomes a sculptural work of art, floating in the middle of the park's lake. tonkinliu.co.uk

② SHOW HIGHLIGHTS

Amelia Bouquet has designed her first show garden for the Lifestyle category at this year's RHS Hampton Court Palace Garden Festival. The Communication Garden (shown), for Mental Health UK, uses woodland planting and native trees. A screen of sweet chestnut poles shelters a wooden seat, underlining the importance of face-to-face communication. Other highlights include a climate-resilient garden by Tom Stuart-Smith, and Will Williams returns with The Viking Friluftsliv Garden, which celebrates Scandinavian outdoor lifestyle and features a kitchen and a fire pit. 6-11 July. rhs.org.uk

③ BIOPHILIC LIVING

Plans have been revealed for what will be the UK's first biophilic, mixed-use development in Swansea. Pobl Group's Biophilic Living project at Picton Yard aims to connect the community to the natural environment, and will provide affordable housing, workspaces and a community farm. A new tower at the rear of the former Woolworth building will open on to a new public and cultural space. Two greenhouses will be sited at roof level, the largest of which will be serviced by an aquaponics system designed to produce up to 4.5 tonnes of fruit, vegetables, salads and herbs each year. poblgroup.co.uk

④ ART BARN, DEVON

Sculptor Peter Randall-Page and his architect son Thomas have transformed a prefabricated modern cow barn in Devon. The father-and-son collaboration in the Teign Valley has converted the 250 square metre barn into a gallery for the sculptor's large-scale works. The cabin-like, elevated studio features a retractable balcony that offers an inspiring view through the tree canopy across the valley. Industrial-scale shutters in cedar and galvanised steel can be rolled back to reveal glass walls that open the central space to the landscape. The cabin is powered by solar panels. thomasrandallpage.com

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Garden of Medicinal Plants – Chelsea Physic Garden

Photo: R Alexander

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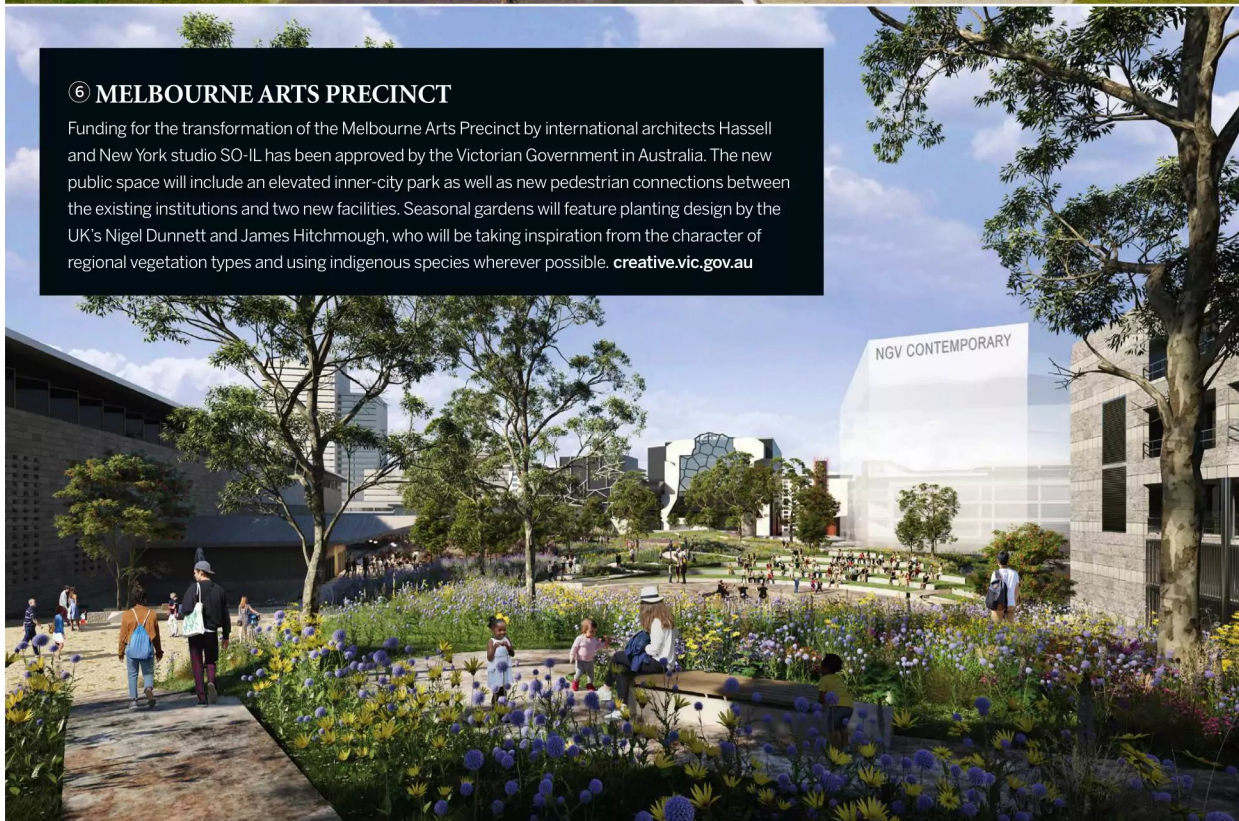
⑤ AULDCATHIE DISTRICT PARK

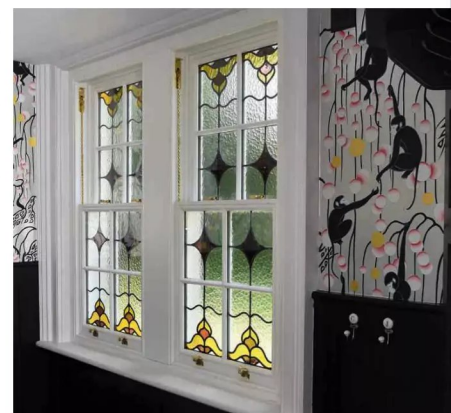
A playground designed by Optimised Environments (OPEN), with input from local school children, is being installed at Auldcaithie District Park in West Lothian, Scotland. The new 85-acre park is part of a major scheme by Winchburg Developments that will provide 3,800 new homes, job opportunities, new schools and improved transport links. This first phase of its development will also include more than 15,000 woodland trees and shrubs, wildflower meadows, a one-acre community garden and grassed playing areas, with walkways linking the park to the Union Canal. winchburghcgg.co.uk



⑥ MELBOURNE ARTS PRECINCT

Funding for the transformation of the Melbourne Arts Precinct by international architects Hassell and New York studio SO-IL has been approved by the Victorian Government in Australia. The new public space will include an elevated inner-city park as well as new pedestrian connections between the existing institutions and two new facilities. Seasonal gardens will feature planting design by the UK's Nigel Dunnett and James Hitchmough, who will be taking inspiration from the character of regional vegetation types and using indigenous species wherever possible. creative.vic.gov.au





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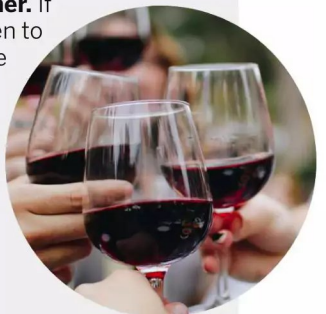


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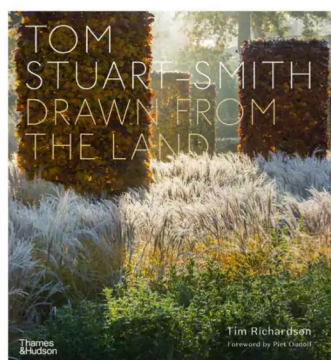
DOWNTOOLS

Book reviews, back issues, crossword, reader competition, a weekend in...



Mismatched table and chairs, perfectly placed beneath a floriferous *Rosa multiflora* 'Grevillei', epitomise the glorious shabby-chic style of Petersham Nurseries celebrated in a new book, reviewed on page 107.

ANDREW MONTGOMERY



**TOM STUART-SMITH:
DRAWN FROM THE LAND**
by Tim Richardson

Thames & Hudson, £50
ISBN 978-0500022313

A collaborative and conversational retrospective of the work – and inner workings – of one of the UK's most influential and imaginative designers.

Reviewer Tania Compton is a garden designer and writer.

The triangulation between place, people and ideas that Tom Stuart-Smith aims for in his gardens has been gloriously echoed in Tim Richardson's book *Tom Stuart-Smith: Drawn From the Land*.

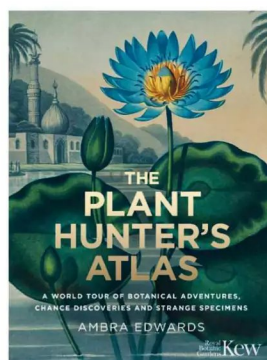
This book and the gardens it describes are grand and opulent but fundamentally tender and thoughtful. The essays by both author and subject that punctuate the descriptions of the gardens are dense and illuminating, giving you not just a bird's-eye view of the places but the thought processes and philosophy that underpin Stuart-Smith's life and work, the dialogue slipping effortlessly between twin planes of intellect and information.

From Kerala to Kent, from Marrakech to the Midlands, with gardens that juxtapose every architectural period from medieval to modernist, the book charts a sumptuous career of place making. Time and again, through the prism of a garden, Stuart-Smith's work impels his clients to also

become observers of a greater process. He is channelling an evocation of paradise on their behalf, often following in giant footsteps. Where Charles Bridgeman, Humphry Repton, Charles Barry, Gertrude Jekyll and Percy Cane have trod, Stuart-Smith has made respectful interventions.

There is a sense as you get to the end that you have been immersed in the pre-prairie years and that latter-day projects, of looser composition yet signature complexity in planning, will follow. The 'pan-global botanical bunfight' of the prairie at The Barn, his own garden, which Stuart-Smith describes from a vantage point halfway up an oak tree, seems to be the way forward for this thought-provoking designer.

According to Richardson, history, science, psychology, ecology and creative design are all given equal weight in Stuart-Smith's methodology. They are explored by both author and subject in this illuminating oeuvre.



**THE PLANT HUNTER'S ATLAS:
A WORLD TOUR OF BOTANICAL
ADVENTURES, CHANCE
DISCOVERIES AND
STRANGE SPECIMENS**
by Ambra Edwards

Greenfinch, £30
ISBN 978-1529410112

A well-conceived book that acts as a thought-provoking introduction to a pertinent topic and a timely reminder of our dependency on plants.

Reviewer Rory Duso is a Kew-trained gardener and writer.

The term 'plant hunter' may still evoke tales of derring-do from the colonial era: George Forrest facing down an almost certain death at the hands of bloodthirsty Buddhist monks to grace our gardens with gentians, primulas and rhododendrons; Francis (Frank) Kingdon-Ward, staggering from the aftermath of a huge earthquake, to collect *Cornus kousa* var. *chinensis*. Such stories abound and are well told in this book, but its scope is considerably broader.

It is perhaps too easy to forget in the industrialised West our utter reliance on the plant kingdom and that the movement of plants across the globe has tracked and at times dictated the rise of civilisations.

In this book, Ambra Edwards takes a broad view of what constitutes plant hunting and explores some of the many ways in which human endeavour and survival are intertwined with a number of plant species.

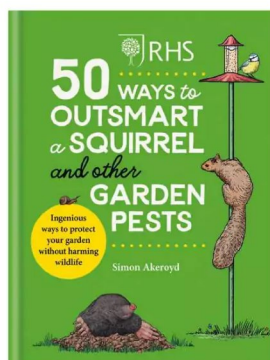
Some of the plant introductions described in this book occurred prehistorically –

traces of *Crocus sativus* (the saffron crocus) have been discovered in cave paintings 50,000 years old – but the author also describes modern plant-hunting endeavours in interesting and unexpected ways.

The section on wheat (*Triticum aestivum*), for instance, rather than diving into the ancient origins of its use by humans, discusses the ground-breaking research into its breeding carried out by the Soviet agronomist Nikolai Ivanovich Vavilov in the 20th century and his tragic demise at the hands of Stalin.

There is a huge depth of knowledge behind this book, but the author's erudition is worn lightly. While accessible to beginners, the book will also be a thought-provoking and refreshing read for those who have read widely around the subject. The format, really a series of short essays, allows the reader to dip into the book without too much commitment, but many readers may find themselves hooked.

BOOK REVIEWS



**50 WAYS TO OUTSMART
A SQUIRREL AND OTHER
GARDEN PESTS**
by Simon Akeroyd

Mitchell Beazley, £12.99
ISBN 978-1784727604

Discover clever methods for protecting your plants and crops without harming wildlife in this engaging and humorous compendium.

Reviewer Catherine Smalley is a nature and garden writer.

Across Britain there is a growing movement towards wildlife-friendly gardening and the public are slowly loosening up, learning to embrace a more live-and-let-live approach to their outdoor spaces. Nettles are creeping in around the edges, dandelions are popping up from lawns, tomatoes are left unsprayed.

But even the most nature-loving gardener will know the gut-wrenching disappointment of losing a plant they have nurtured over weeks and months to a slug, deer or caterpillar. This book nobly attempts to provide solutions that are eco-friendly and humane, yet – importantly – still effective.

Did you know, for instance, that peppermint will ward off mice? (They rely on their strong sense of smell to detect predators and something pungent makes them feel vulnerable.) Or that growing summer savory next to broad beans will deter black aphids? And it's not just plants that are covered: there are ways to

protect fish from herons and stop squirrels eating your bird seed (it involves chilli...).

The pages are vibrant, filled with illustrations and easy-to-follow, how-to guides, and Akeroyd's writing is humorous and playful. However, I disliked the language used to describe some animals as 'pests' and 'irritants' to be 'outwitted' and 'frightened off', which reinforces the view of gardens as a battleground between humans and nature.

Overall the approach is holistic and Akeroyd explains the importance of rotating crops and boosting your plants' health and resilience to help them cope with 'pests', as well as encouraging natural predators, such as birds and bats, to control insect numbers. I particularly enjoyed the zoological information on the different animals scattered throughout.

If, in despair and dejection, you've been tempted to reach for a bottle of insecticide or order an animal trap, then think again; here's a whole book of handy tips and tricks.



PETERSHAM NURSERIES
by the Boglione family

Petersham Nurseries, £65
ISBN 978-1838293109

A lavish and stunningly photographed history of 20 years of the iconic Richmond nursery, run by a family committed to nature and positive living.

Reviewer Lia Leendertz is a food and garden writer.

This book, written by the family that owns and runs Petersham Nurseries, is as sumptuous and beautiful as you would expect if you have ever visited. The nursery has become known for its glorious shabby-chic style and its seasonal food – its restaurant was started by Australian chef Skye Gyngell – as much as it is for its plants.

The bulk of the book tells the story of the nursery's development from a run-down garden centre bordering the Bogliones' garden, acquired partly to prevent the land being developed, to the world-renowned business it is today. It discusses the role of each family member, making it in places read like an artfully curated family scrapbook.

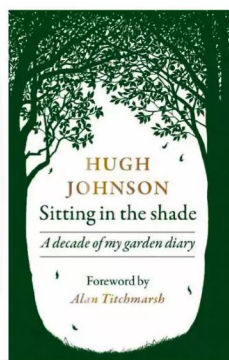
The styling of the nursery is gorgeous, and is captured in lavish, moody, atmospheric style by Andrew Montgomery, the perfect photographer for such a subject. Here are old glasshouses hung with chandeliers and dripping with ferns, there artfully

mismatched chairs alongside zinc-topped tables groaning with displays of seasonal flowers, and a vase of voluptuously fading tulips, surely captured in the moment before the first petal fell: beautiful food, beautiful plants and beautiful people.

The book is not all history; it is split between the four seasons and interspersed with ideas on how to create a little corner of Petersham chic for yourself. There are pages on creating an obelisk of Petersham-favoured sweet peas, on growing their favourite roses, on creating the beautiful 'tablescapes' laid on for special occasions, and on making wild and naturalistic festive wreaths. There are also eight recipes per season, highly seasonal and stunning, to allow the reader to recreate the food from the famous glasshouse restaurant.

There is much to admire at Petersham, and the Bogliones have relished the opportunity to celebrate and mark their 20 years in business in book form.

BOOK REVIEWS



**SITTING IN THE SHADE:
A DECADE OF MY GARDEN DIARY**
by Hugh Johnson

Mitchell Beazley, £17.99
ISBN 978-1784727079

Trad has been sharing his thoughts with gardeners since 1975 – perceptive, opinionated, witty and wise. We couldn't wish for better company.

Reviewer Ambra Edwards is an author and garden historian.

How can you not warm to a man who names his goldfish Diogenes? (A loner in a tub, geditit?) Equally, he can turn the fall of a leaf into a poetic meditation. This is a book to be sipped and savoured, to roll luxuriously around the tongue, relishing its nuance, its craftsmanship, its deliciously idiosyncratic flavour. But so entirely moreish is it, that it's hard to resist shameless bingeing.

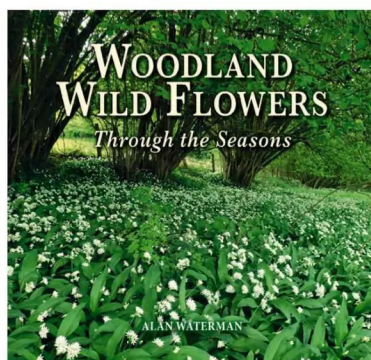
Trad is the alter ego of celebrated wine writer Hugh Johnson – a persona he slips into as donning 'an old tweed jacket, cuffs fraying and elbows patched'. If this characterisation suggests fogeydom, think again. There is a freshness and verve in these diaries that make the most familiar things seem suddenly astonishing and newly minted: the smell of rain, petals floating on water, the astounding efficiency of roots.

It is a privileged life Trad recounts, certainly. He flits urbanely between France and

Italy, Kyoto and Beijing, California and New York (at least before Covid strikes). He plants hydrangeas on the Solent, and woodlands in rural Wales. When Trad downsizes, as he does in June 2013, it is not to a plastic-windowed retirement flat, but a Kensington townhouse. 'Our new garden is precisely one 536th the size of the old one,' he observes.

It is perhaps hard, for a man with a passion for trees, that it should be dominated by an outsized sycamore. But it is a challenge to which he rises with his customary curiosity and intelligence. 'Town gardening,' he decides, 'is like putting on reading glasses', and he adjusts his focus accordingly.

Naturally enough, he draws a parallel between wine and gardens: both offer 'sensual pleasures with a strong tincture of the intellectual'. There could be no better summation of these elegant, erudite and endlessly entertaining observations.



**WOODLAND
WILD FLOWERS:
THROUGH THE
SEASONS**

by Alan Waterman

Merlin Unwin
Books, £20
ISBN 978-1913159252

Sure to get you flower spotting in the woods, this informative and knowledgeable guide encourages us to truly engage with our forest ecosystems.

Reviewer Hannah Gardner is a horticulturist and garden writer.

The benefits of spending time in woodland are numerous, and this fascinating book is a worthy companion, though I found the expansive final chapter of this insightful guide to woodland plants the most interesting. Under the heading 'Woodlands: why they look like they do today', the author Alan Waterman very neatly condenses a lifetime of natural history knowledge into one brilliant chapter.

Discussing the history of British woodland since the last Ice Age receded some 12,000 years ago, he delves into areas such as sustainable woodland coppicing, listing species, their cutting cycles and uses. Details on how to age trees, pollen analysis, and the lifecycle and survival methods of woodland plants follow.

The effect of light levels and the structure of woodland soils are demystified. Waterman has a gift for communicating complex ideas in an authoritative but unfussy style.

As the director of a field study centre for more than

25 years and the owner of a six-acre Welsh woodland, his lively writing feels personal – a tapestry of memoir, observation, plant science, folklore and ecology.

The book is based around a catalogue of 170 woodland plant profiles, grouped into chapters by flowering season. Starting with early spring carpets of crocus, violets and lungwort, I soon appreciated how much is of interest later in the year. Each profile is a cornucopia of detail, describing key characteristics, wildlife benefits and habitat preference and lavishly illustrated with the author's own photographs to help with identification. There is also a useful glossary of botanical terms and an index of common and botanical names.

This isn't necessarily a book to read cover to cover (although that last chapter...), but one to reach for before you venture out into the cool, peaceful haven of the woods or to turn to – as an alternative to Google – upon your return.

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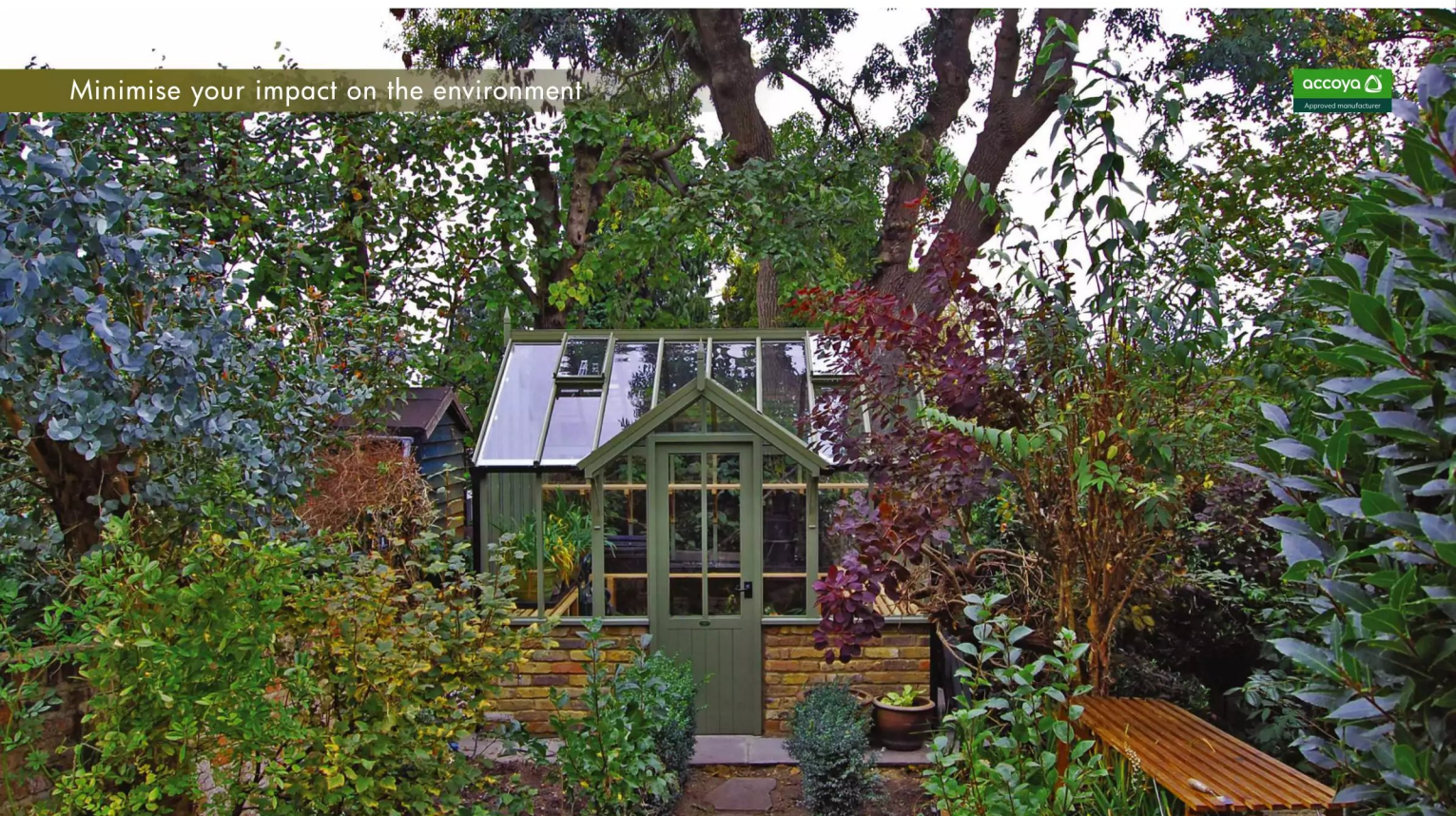
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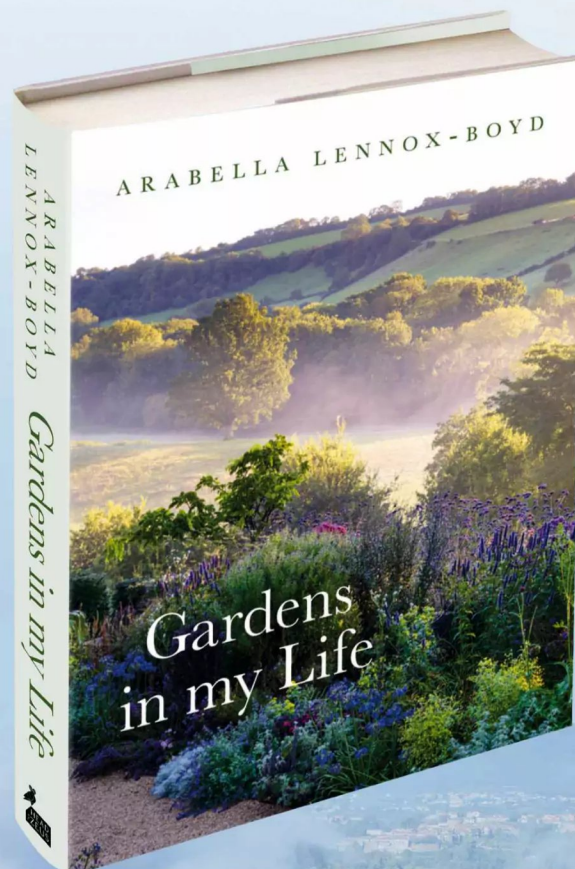
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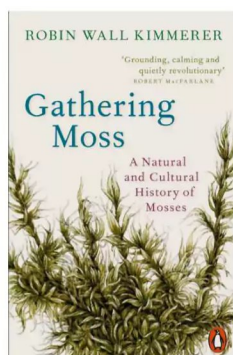
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BOOK REVIEWS



**GATHERING MOSS:
A NATURAL AND CULTURAL
HISTORY OF MOSSES**
by Robin Wall Kimmerer

Oregon State University, £17.50
ISBN 978-0870714993

A beautifully written series of essays blending science and personal experience, revealing the world of mosses in ecology and culture.

Reviewer Matthew Biggs is a Kew-trained gardener and presenter.

Moss is an oft-overlooked group within the plant world, but this inspiring book opens the mind and the senses to their possibilities, and goes a considerable way to righting this wrong. The author, a highly respected academic and member of the Native American Potawatomi Nation, has a passion and empathy for her subject that is both inspiring and contagious. Her unique approach – telling the story of mosses and what humans can learn from them – is inspired by her cultural heritage of learning through the vehicles of ‘mind, body, emotion, spirit and sight’.

As a result, this is no dry academic work, but a richly eloquent ‘love-in’ based on a deep understanding and respect for mosses and their impact and role on Earth and its multitudinous ecosystems.

Chapters lead you through a range of situations and scenarios, including field trips in the USA and the Amazon, the science of survival, moss ecology and its role as a healer of Earth and its inhabitants,

effortlessly plucking lessons from the wonders of our mossy world in a glorious feat of subliminal learning.

Two astonishing chapters – the heartrending *The Owner*, and *The Red Sneaker*, an emotional and timely homage to a sphagnum bog – are worth the purchase price alone and should be considered as essential reading, particularly for those showing scant regard for the wonders of the Earth.

This uplifting, educational and enjoyable book, interwoven with cautionary tales, will appeal to the general reader, or anyone who is fascinated by the natural world or who seeks to know more about these remarkable plants.

In the early pages Kimmerer writes of students being gradually drawn in as their understanding and appreciation of the subject increases – do not be surprised if this also happens to you.

You may never have believed it possible to feel this way about moss.

Other books

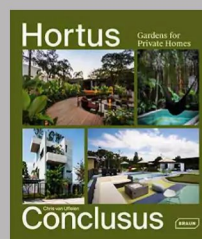
This month’s additional books include detailed reading on fungi and moths, garden apothecary and houseplants.



THE GREEN INDOORS

by Maddie Bailey and Alice Bailey,
Hardie Grant Books, £16.99,
ISBN 978-1784883959

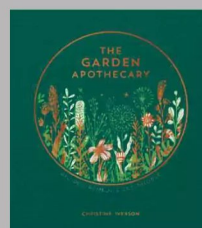
Make your living space work with your plants, encouraging healthy growth. Includes plant profiles and chapters on the different indoor climate conditions.



HORTUS CONCLUSUS

by Chris van Uffelen,
Braun, £29.95,
ISBN 978-3037682692

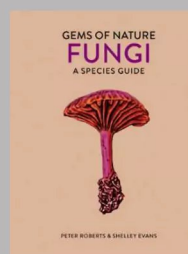
A glossy look at some beautiful private gardens – from a garden of only 20 square metres to one of over 2,000 square metres – to inspire your own design ideas.



THE GARDEN APOTHECARY

by Christine Iverson,
Summersdale, £14.99,
ISBN 978-1787839793

Learn about the art of the apothecarist, and how safely to identify edible plants and make the most of the treasures you can find in your garden.



FUNGI: A SPECIES GUIDE

by Peter Roberts and Shelley Evans,
Ivy Press, £12.99,
ISBN 978-0711258457

A comprehensive guide from the *Gems of Nature* series to a wide range of fungi species. Beautifully illustrated, with species profiles and maps showing their distribution.



MUCH ADO ABOUT MOTHING

by James Lowen,
Bloomsbury Wildlife, £18.99,
ISBN 978-1472966971

Covering the seasons and diverse British landscapes by following historic trails, the author documents the history and beauty of these fascinating specimens.



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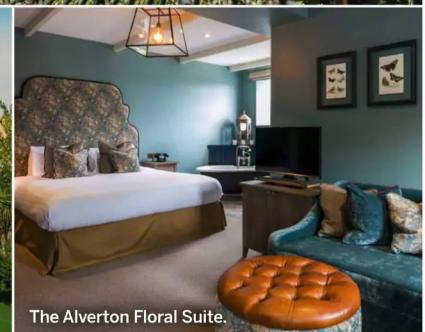
The Alverton, a romantic, four-star hotel in Cornwall, is offering one reader the chance to win a two-night stay for two in a Junior Suite. This Grade II-listed former convent in the cathedral city of Truro simply oozes charm with its own bell tower, original flagstone flooring, stained-glass windows, ivy-clad walls and stunning archways uncovering hidden hideaways.

Just a short stroll from Truro's magnificent cathedral and the thrum of the Cornish capital's busy streets, the historic hotel offers 53 en-suite guest bedrooms, including garden view rooms and sumptuous suites, complete with their own free-standing bathtubs. All rooms celebrate the original features of the 19th-century building, complemented by bespoke contemporary furnishings, king-sized beds and wide-screen TVs. It's an ideal getaway for anyone looking to relax and unwind, and enjoy some delicious cuisine prepared using the finest foraged, fished and farmed Cornish ingredients in the two AA-rossette Alverton restaurant.

It's also perfectly placed for exploring Cornwall's beautiful south coast and some of the county's most stunning gardens, including Glendurgan, Trebask, Trebah and the wonderful Lost Gardens of Heligan. Part of the Tremayne family estate near St Austell, the gardens at Heligan date back to the 18th century but were lost to time and brambles in the years following the First World War, when at least nine of the estate's 22 gardeners were killed in the fighting. In 1990 the 200 acres were re-awakened by the creator of the Eden Project, Tim Smit, and became Europe's largest garden restoration project. The gardens are now open every day, apart from Christmas Day, and two tickets to this magical place are also included in the prize. Find out more about the gardens at heligan.com

COMPETITION PRIZE INCLUDES*

- A two-night stay for two at The Alverton Hotel in a Junior Suite, including a hearty Cornish breakfast both mornings.
- A three-course dinner for two on one evening.
- Two tickets to The Lost Gardens of Heligan.



HOW TO ENTER

For your chance to win, answer the following question:

Heligan is the Cornish name for which tree?

a) Willow b) Oak c) Hazel

Enter online at gardensillustrated.com/alvertoncomp

Closing date 11.59pm, 19 July 2021.

Terms and conditions apply*.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Full terms and conditions can be found at gardensillustrated.com/alvertoncomp. Entrants must be UK residents, aged 18 or over. *Prize based on two people sharing, valid for six months from the nomination of winner, excluding Christmas, New Year, Easter and Bank Holidays, and subject to availability. **Price, based on two people sharing a Classic Room, valid from 1 November 2021 to 28 February 2022 (excluding 24 December 2021 to 2 January 2022 and 11-14 February 2022), and subject to availability of allocated rooms.

SPECIAL READER OFFER

If you're not lucky enough to win our prize you can save on a Cosy Cornish Retreat at The Alverton over the winter months, from £139** per couple, per night, for award-winning accommodation, full Cornish breakfast, a two-course dinner and Cornish cream tea to share. For more details or to book, please call 01872 276633, quoting *Gardens Illustrated*, or visit thealverton.co.uk

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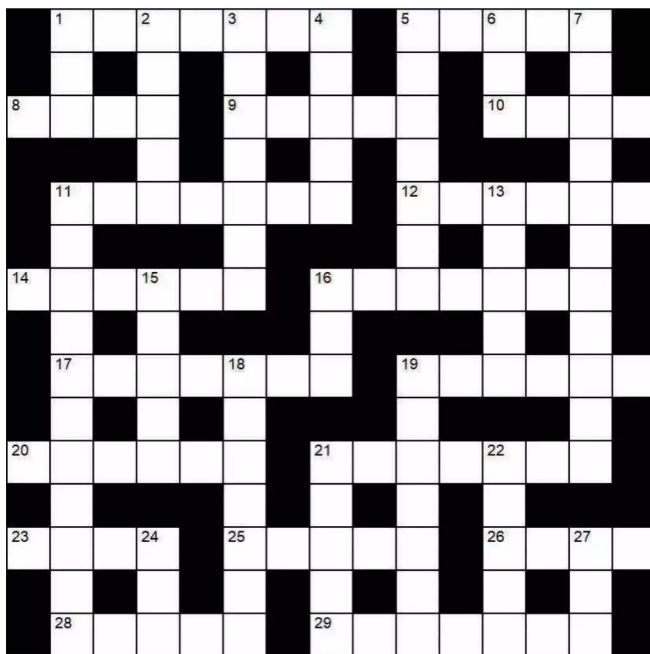
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Crossword



ACROSS

- 1 _____ *dealbata*, the silvery tree fern – somewhat fancy at heart (7)
 5 Tree of *Rhus* genus (5)
 8 Fruiting side shoot – an incentive? (4)
 9 Spiky perennial flower of legume family (5)
 10 Umbelliferous herb *Anethum graveolens* (4)
 11 A *Limonium* plant, also called sea lavender, seen in August at Iceland (7)
 12 In lacecaps, identified a sap-sucking bug (6)
 14 Term for shrubs that protect young plants – state-enrolled ones? (6)
 16 Small underground plant growth (7)
 17 Decorative trimming of shrubs etc (7)
 19 The 'spider flower' genus – welcome (if top removed) arrangement (6)
 20 An appropriately named tulip with wine-red petals (produces elm rot) (6)
 21 Monroe's first tulip with white flowers, splashed red (7)
 23 Tiny, flowerless plant not welcome in lawns (4)
 25 Genus of peppery-leaved rocket salad – provides a cure (5)
 26 See 11 down
 28 White narcissus named after John, the 18th-century Romantic poet (5)
 29 Aromatic plant *Dictamnus albus*, also called fraxinella... one in a simple song (7)

DOWN

- 1 Top of mushroom found in brassica patch (3)
 2 Species name and/or given name meaning 'golden' (5)
 3 See 24 down
 4 After oak, this fruit is a nut gall (5)
 5 So niece changed genus of plants including cineraria and ragwort (7)
 6 Damp earth liked by eg carex plants? (3)
 7 Bottlebrush genus comes in tall variety (11)
 11/26 Fronded plant, *Matteuccia struthiopteris* – at home on a badminton court? (11,4)
 13 Eg pea or bean seed (5)
 15 Part of flower's calyx – in greenhouse palm (5)
 16 First name of renowned Lancashire horticulturist, contributing to pennyroyal (3)
 18 Pollen-producing flower parts (7)
 19 Ribes fruit present, we hear (7)
 21 A sign of *Botrytis* on leaves, etc (5)
 22 Genus of gourd plant – mostly grown for its sponge (5)
 24/3 Common name of spiny coastal plants *Eryngium maritimum* (3,7)
 27 One of the florets surrounding disc floret of eg daisy – spot of sunshine? (3)

* Solutions to this issue's crossword will be printed in the July issue

SOLUTION TO JUNE ISSUE'S CROSSWORD

ACROSS 1 Creep 4 Sophora 8 Weed 9 Stink 10 Lacy 11 Spartium 12 Habit 14 Stamen 16 Arisaema 18 Marjoram 21 Bidens 22 Bored 23 Lonicera 25 Plug 27 Twine 28 Lots 29 Solomon 30 Scape.
 DOWN 1 Cleopatra 2 Elder 3 Passion 4 Skimmia 5 Pak choi 6 Oil 7 Ancot 13 Beard 15 Major 17 Minarette 19 Red stem 20/22 Million Bells 21 Bonnets 24 Calla 26 Gel.

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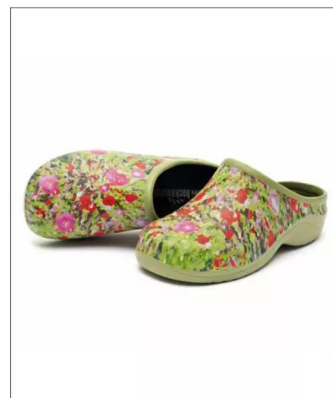
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Summer is a great time to visit this collection of stunning gardens



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1 Brookside, Cambridge CB2 1JE | 01223 336265 | botanic.ac.cam.uk



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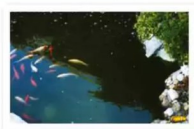
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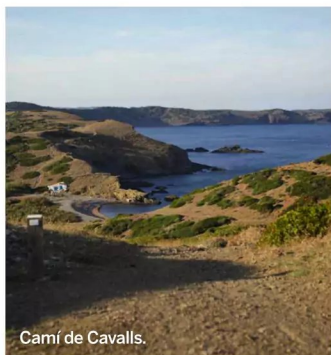


How to spend a gardener's weekend in...

Menorca

Ibiza and Majorca may be the best known of the Balearic islands, but the quiet island of Menorca, home to several endemic plant species, has much to tempt gardeners

Of the four main Balearic islands, Menorca is often labelled 'the quiet one'. But after almost 30 years of UNESCO World Heritage status, July's planned opening of Hauser & Wirth Menorca – an ambitious new arts centre with landscaping by Piet Oudolf – the island's distinctive character is being thrust into the limelight.



Camí de Cavalls.

Exploring

Many of the perfect beaches around Menorca were, until fairly recently, only accessible to those who were prepared to swim part of the way, or abseil down a cliff. More recently, a hitherto overgrown network of 800-year-old bridle paths, the **Camí de Cavalls**, was cleared and sign-posted, offering the best way to see the island in close-up whether by foot, horse or bicycle. Find information on every leg of the 185km route at camidecavalls.com. Menorca is the largest UNESCO biosphere in the Mediterranean, reaching 12km into coastal waters. The island is diverse in habitat, with caves, ravines, lagoons and marshes. Car parking on beaches has been replaced by sand dunes that bristle with indigenous flora. Long-established nature reserve **Albufera des Grau** is a magnet for bird watchers, as well as beach-goers, kayakers and walkers.

Mahón

Menorca has seen the comings and goings of foreigners for three millennia, while harbouring its own rich home-grown cultural life – as

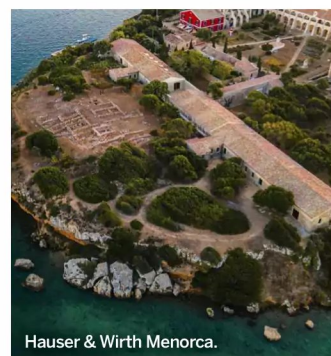
seen in the many megalithic and Bronze Age monuments that blend into the stony landscape. The port at **Mahón**, wide and deep, is one of the world's longest natural harbours, and the town is particularly graceful in the quiet streets overlooking its clear waters. **Calle Isabel II** begins with the island's museum and ends at the church of Santa Maria, passing 18th-century houses that are discreetly palatial, such as **Can Alberti**, now a boutique hotel. Further along the way, **Cristanal y Gradinata** makes for a delightful drink and *boccadillo* before heading to the stately food and fish markets. Try to fit in a concert at the 1820s **Teatro Principal**, one of Spain's oldest opera houses.



Can Alberti, Mahón.

Es Castell

Towards the harbour mouth and across the water from Es Castell, **Isla del Rey** had long been a curiosity, with its decommissioned naval hospital and ruins of a much older basilica. But recently, having seen Menorca's potential, like so many before, the art gallerist **Hauser & Wirth** has had the small island repurposed as an ambitious arts centre. Landscaping by Piet Oudolf will be revealed in July. Along the coast and facing the sea, **Sant Joan de Binissaida** is a grand old *agroturismo*, a farming estate with a restaurant and lodgings, on one of the loveliest stretches of Camí de Cavalls. Towards San Luis and its surrounding hamlets (one of which, Torret, has a good restaurant, **Pan y Vino**), the well-regarded winery

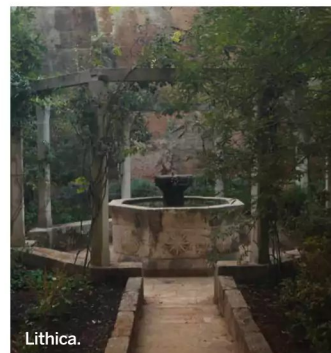


Hauser & Wirth Menorca.

Binifadet is a must for wine-tasting, or dinner next to the vineyard.

Ciutadella

Moving across the island, **San Clemente** is a classic Menorcan village with a small square overlooked by **Es Casino** bar, a meeting place for locals and visitors, and a fine place for coffee or *calamari à la plancha*. At the other end, the last truly artisan baker sells *crespells de sobrasada*, lard biscuits stuffed with the Balearic specialty of cured (and usually raw) spiced pork. He is sold out by 11am. The grocery shop sells local charcuterie and world-class Mahón cheese. Former capital **Ciutadella** is a beautiful old town, only some of



Lithica.

which is very crowded. The season of fiestas, in honour of local saints and horses, begins here in June, progressing across the island towards Mahón. **Lithica** is a monumental and wonderful garden-in-progress, on the site of the island's historic main quarry, Pedreres de s'Hostal.

COURTESY MENORCA WILSON, IMAGES: JIM POWELL / HAUSER & WIRTH MENORCA ON ISLA DEL REY, COURTESY HAUSER & WIRTH, PHOTO: BE CREATIVE, MENORCA

Souvenirs

Best boccadillo (sandwich)

Cristanal y Gradinata, Mahón

Best noisy local family restaurant

Bar España, Es Castell

Best drinks-and-dinner

Binifadet winery, San Luis

Best pick-me-up

smoothies by the car park in Es Grau, Italian ice cream van at Cala Mesquida

Best browse the

indoor market in Mahón

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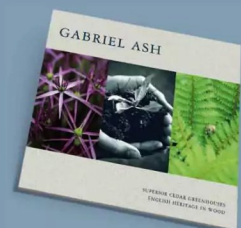


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